



Variance Review

TO: City of Grosse Pointe Woods
FROM: Paige Smith, NCI
Ashley Jankowski, AICP
SUBJECT: 1191 S Renaud Road (#009-03-0702-002) – Variance Review #1
DATE: November 13, 2025

BACKGROUND AND VARIANCE REQUEST

The applicants, Jeffery and Megan Burns request a variance for the residential lot at 1191 S Renaud Road in order to construct an addition to an existing single-family home which would encroach into the minimum required side yard setback. The subject site is zoned R-1A, One-Family Residential District and is an interior lot, located south of Lochmoor Boulevard and west of Fairway Drive.

The applicant requests the following variances, pursuant to the City's Zoning Ordinance:

Code Section	Ordinance Requirements		Proposed	Requested Variance
Sec. 50-3.1.A(4)	Minimum side yard.	Least one: 10 feet Total of two: 25 feet	7'10" on the west side yard, 19'10.2" for a total side yard setback	West side yard setback: 2'.2" Total side yard setback: 5'1.8"



Variance Criteria and Evaluation

Per Section 50-7.15.I.1, the Zoning Board of Appeals may grant a dimensional variance only upon a finding that compliance with the restrictions governing area, setbacks, frontage, height, bulk, density, or other dimensional provisions would create a practical difficulty. A finding of practical difficulty, based on competent, material, and substantial evidence on the record, shall require the petitioner to demonstrate that all of the five criteria below are met.

Additional information brought forward by the Board, the applicant, and/or during the public hearing should be incorporated into the record prior to the Board making any determination. Our comments follow:

CRITERIA #1:

That strict compliance with the restrictions governing area, setbacks, frontage, height, bulk, density, and other similar items would unreasonably prevent the petitioner from using the property for a permitted purpose or would render conformity with said restrictions unnecessarily burdensome.

Findings:

The subject site is zoned in the R-1A, One-Family Residential District where, per Section 50-3.1.A, the intent of the district is to provide for single-unit dwellings and related community uses. The applicant does not propose changing the use of the property from a detached single-unit dwelling.

The purpose statement of the R-1A District provides:

“The R-1A one-family residential district is established as a district in which the principal use of land is for single-family dwellings and related educational, cultural and religious uses where found appropriate and harmonious with the residential environment....the specific intent is to:

- a. Encourage the construction of and the continued use of the land for single-family dwellings.*
- b. Prohibit business, commercial or industrial use of the land, and prohibit any other use which would substantially interfere with development or maintenance of single-family dwellings in the district.*
- c. Encourage the discontinuance of existing uses that would not be permitted as new uses under the provisions of this district.*
- d. Discourage any land use that would generate traffic on minor or local streets, other than normal traffic to serve the residences on those streets.*
- e. Discourage any use which, because of its character or size, would create requirements and costs for public services, such as fire and police protection, water supply and sewerage, substantially in excess of such requirements and costs if the district were developed solely for single-family dwellings.”*

The construction of the proposed addition aligns with the intent of the district, where single-unit dwellings are a permitted, by-right use.

Strict application of the R-1A District's dimensional standards would severely limit the ability to construct an addition of substantial size. The table on the following page identifies the specific deviations requested in red, underlined font, and also notes where compliance is maintained.



Development Standards	Required	Proposed	Requested Variance
Lot Sizes:			
Min. Lot Size	8,500 square feet	14,845 square feet	Complies.
Min. Lot Width	75 feet	96.2 feet	Complies.
Setbacks:			
Min. Front Yard	40 feet	40.5 feet	Complies.
Min. Side Yard (least of one)	10 feet	7'10" (west) 12'.02" (east)	2'2" (west) Complies (east)
Min. Side Yard (total of two)	25 feet	19'10.2"	5'1.8"
Min. Rear Yard	28 feet	47.67 feet	Complies.
Building Height:			
Max. Number of Stories	2.5 stories	1-story	Complies.
Max. Height in Feet	30 feet	>30 feet	Complies.
Unit Sizes:			
Min. Square Feet: 1-story	1,400 square feet	~3,631 square feet	Complies.
Min. Square Feet: 1.5- to 2-stories	1,960 square feet	N/A	N/A
Max. Lot Coverage (structures):	35%	26.77%	Complies.
Max. Impervious Surface (excluding structures):	35%	<35%	Complies.

Applying the current side yard setback requirements to this lot would result in a reduction of the proposed addition by approximately 5 feet. The principal dwelling unit was constructed to comply with the previous Zoning Ordinance, which permitted a reduced side setback in the R1-A District. Granting the requested variances would allow the proposed addition to be constructed flush with the existing western wall.

Importantly, as the table above highlights, the site meets all other applicable dimensional requirements of this district and significantly exceeds the minimum required lot width and lot area.

CRITERIA #2:

That a variance would do substantial justice to the petitioner as well as to other petitioners in the zoning district; or whether a lesser relaxation of the restrictions would give substantial relief to the petitioner and be more consistent with justice to others (i.e., are there other more reasonable alternatives).

Findings:

If approved as requested, the variances would allow the construction of a roughly 700 square foot (22'8" by 30') addition that would not extend past the existing western wall of the home. Granting the requested variances would allow the home to be expanded in a way that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood, where other homes are built on lots of similar size or with comparable dimensional limitations.

A lesser variance would likely result in an addition that does not make efficient or practical use of the lot. The proposed variance appropriately balances the applicant's desire to use the property efficiently with



maintenance of overall character of the area. The variance is not anticipated to offer an unfair advantage not available to others.

CRITERIA #3:

That the plight of the petitioner is due to unique circumstances of the property.

Findings:

The property is not unique compared to other residential lots in the area. However, it does significantly exceed the minimum required lot width and area of other lots in the district.

CRITERIA #4:

That the petitioner's problem is not self-created.

Findings:

The applicant's problem is not self-created as the home is an existing nonconformity and was built to comply with previous ordinance regulations (previously a total of 20' for a side yard setback was required). The concrete patio in the backyard installed by previous owners also restricts the current owner's ability to extend their home into the rear yard. The applicant is seeking to construct an addition that is flush with the existing west side of the home.

CRITERIA #5:

That the spirit of this chapter will be observed, public safety and welfare secured, and substantial justice done.

Findings:

The requested variance supports the intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance by enabling the reasonable expansion of an existing residential use, in a manner that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed addition would not negatively affect public safety or welfare.



Recommendation

Subject to any additional information presented and discussed by the applicant, Board, and/or the public during the public hearing and incorporated into the record prior to any findings being made, we recommend that the Zoning Board of Appeals approve the requested minimum side yard (west: 2'.2") and total yard setback (5'11.8") variances to Section 50-3.1.A based on the following findings of fact:

1. The subject property is an established, nonconforming lot; with the primary dwelling unit located approximately 8 feet from the western property line. Strictly following the current R-1A zoning requirements for side yard setbacks would prevent the applicant from substantially expanding the single-unit home.
2. The proposed addition is consistent with the intent of the R-1A One-Family Residential District, which encourages single-unit, detached residential development and is a permitted, by right use.
3. The proposed addition will follow the existing western building line of the home, which results in a more uniform building design.
4. The need for relief is not self-created, as the home was constructed to comply with a previous Zoning Ordinance requiring 8-foot side setbacks. The existing concrete patio in the rear yard was also constructed by the previous owner and due to its location, impedes potential building expansion into the rear yard.
5. All other applicable zoning requirements of the R-1A district are met, including lot coverage, building height, and front and rear setbacks.
6. Approval of the variances upholds the spirit and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, maintains neighborhood character, and maintains public health and safety.

Should you have any questions, please reach out to us. Thank you.

CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
Building Department
20025 Mack Plaza, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236
Ph 313.343.2426/Fax 313.343.2439

RECEIVED

OCT 01 2025

BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION
ZONING COMPLIANCE AND PLAN REVIEW

CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
BUILDING DEPARTMENT

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

ZONING COMPLIANCE INCLUDES: Drives, Fences, Accessory Structures/Sheds (less than 200 sq ft), Awning, Garage Floors, Patios (non-elevated), Play Structures (NOTE: This list is not all inclusive. If you have any questions, please call the Building Department @ 313-343-2426.

Property Owner Name: JEFF Burns Date: 1 OCT 2025

GP Woods Address: 1191 S/Renard C.P.W. e-mail: _____

Work#: _____ Home/Cell#: _____

Contractor/Applicant Name: G.P.H. Services. (Grosse Pointe Home Services, LLC)

Telephone # 313 757 1969 Fax # _____ Mobile/Cell # 248 361 3637

Contractor Address: 15003 Charlevoix ST G.P. Park MI 48230

MI Builder's License #: 2102214048/2101189591 MI Driver's License #: _____

e-mail address: Awhittaker@gphservices.com

SPECIFY NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK:

Add a 22.67' x 30' addition to side
Rear of home per plans. Use: master bedroom,
master bathroom, First Floor Laundry.

Value of Construction \$ 185,000

Section 23a of State Construction Code Act of 1972, No. 230 of the Public Acts of 1972, being Section 125.1523a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, prohibits a person from conspiring to circumvent the licensing requirements of the State relating to persons who are to perform work on a residential building or a residential structure. Violations of Section 23a are subject to civil fines.

Applicant Signature: _____

I hereby certify that the proposed work is authorized by the owner of record and that I have been authorized by the owner to make this application as his authorized agent and we agree to conform to all applicable laws of this jurisdiction.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved: _____ Denied: _____ Zoning Board of Approval Required # _____

Inspector: _____ Date: _____



CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS

Building Department

20025 Mack Plaza, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236

Ph.: 313-343-2426/Fax 313-343-2439

10/03/2025

G.P.H. SERVICES - Grosse Pointe Home Services LLC
15003 CHARLEVOIX
GROSSE POINTE PARK, MI 48230

RE: 1191 S RENAUD RD

Dear Applicant,

Your Plan Review for permit PB250452 was not approved by Jeremy Collins:

50-3.1.A R-1A One-Family Residential-Setbacks 50-3.1.A R-1A One-Family Residential

4. Development standards

Setbacks (in feet)

Minimum front yard: 40

Minimum side yard

Least one: 10

Total of two: 25

Minimum rear yard: 28

INSPECTOR COMMENTS: *The proposed addition to the home encroaches into the required side yard setback area. The current structure is an existing non-conforming use. An approved variance is required to build in the side yard setback area.*

Please re-submit your revised documents to the Building Department via email
building@gpwmi.us

If you have any questions, please contact the Building Department at (313) 343-2426.

Respectfully,

Jeremy Collins

Jeremy Collins
Building Department - Grosse Pointe Woods



*****THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED*****
CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
20025 MACK PLAZA – GROSSE POINTE WOODS, MI 48236
CITY CLERK - (313) 343-2440 - FAX (313) 343-2785
BUILDING DEPARTMENT - 313-343-2426 - FAX (313) 343-2439

APPLICATION TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

1. Address of the Property 1191 S Renaud
(Number and Street)

TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

I (We) Jeffrey & Megan Burns
Name (Please Print) Phone No. (Daytime)
1191 S Renaud GPW MI 48236
Address City State Zip

Hereby appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance to:
Minimum side yard setback as outlined in section
50-3.1.A for residential zone R-1A

2. DESCRIPTION OF CASE (Fill out only items that apply)
- a. Present zoning classification of the property Residential
- b. Description of property
- (1) Size and Area of Lot Avg Width X Avg Depth = 96.2 x 154.3 = 14,845 sq. ft.
- (2) Is the lot a corner or interior lot Interior

Payment Validation

- c. Description of EXISTING structures
- (1) Total square footage of accessory building now on
Premises 324; of main buildings 2971
- (2) Uses of building on premises Single Family Home

*****THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED*****

- (3) Percentage of lot coverage of all buildings on ground level 22.2 %

d. Description of PROPOSED structures

- (1) Height of proposed structure Same as existing
- (2) Height and area of existing structure Single Story
- (3) Dimensions and area of structure or addition to be constructed 22' 8" x 30' 0"
- (4) Percentage of lot coverage of all buildings including proposed 26.77 %

e. Yard setbacks after completion of addition/structure

- (1) Front Yard (measured from lot line) 40' 6"
- (2) Side Yard (measured from lot line) 7' 10"
- (3) Rear Yard (measured from lot line) 47' 8"

- f. A sketch drawn to scale depicting the above information shall Be included herewith.

3. TYPE OF VARIANCE REQUEST: NON-USE – Common regulations subject to non-use variance requests: setbacks, height or parking regulations, lot coverage, bulk or landscaping restrictions. Uniqueness: odd shape, small size, wetland, creek, natural features, big trees or slopes.

The applicant must present evidence to show that if the zoning ordinance is applied strictly, a practical difficulty to the applicant will result, and that all four of the following requirements are met: (please answer all four).

- a) That the ordinance restrictions unreasonable prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose.

See Attached

- b) That the variance would do substantial justice to the applicant as well as to other property owners in the district, and a lesser relaxation than that requested would not give substantial relief to the owner of the property or be more consistent with justice to other property owners.

See Attached

*****THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED*****

- c) That the plight of the landowner is due to the unique circumstances of the property.

See Attached

- d) That the alleged hardship has not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.

See Attached

***NOTE:** When answering questions pertaining to use and non-use variances, additional paper may be used if necessary.

4. TYPE OF VARIANCE REQUEST: USE – A use variance permits a use of land that is otherwise not allowed in that zoning district. The applicant must present evidence to show that if the zoning ordinance is applied strictly, an unnecessary hardship to the applicant will result, and that all four of the following requirements are met (*please answer all reasons*):

- a) That the property could not be reasonably used for the purpose permitted in that zone.

- b) That the appeal results from unique circumstances to the property and not from general neighborhood conditions

- c) That the use requested by the variance would not alter the essential character of the area.

THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED

- d) That the alleged hardship has not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.

When granting any variance, the Board must ensure that the spirit of the ordinance is observed, public safety secured, and substantial justice done.

5. Interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance is requested because:

See attached.

6. Article and Section of the Zoning Ordinance that is being appealed:

50-3.1.A

I hereby depose and say that all the above statements and the statements contained in the papers submitted herewith are true and correct.

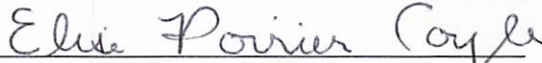


Signature of Property Owner



Signature of Applicant

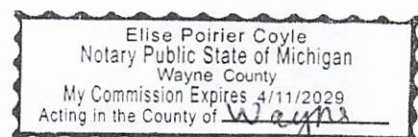
Subscribed and sworn to before me this 16 day of OCTOBER 20 25



Notary Public

My Commission expires 04-11-29

NOTE: The Zoning Board of Appeals meets the first and third Monday of each month at 7:30 PM. The application must be filed with the City Clerk with a fee in the amount of \$375 a minimum of 14 days prior to council hearing.



3. TYPE OF VARIANCE REQUEST: NON-USE – Common regulations subject to non-use variance requests: setbacks, height or parking regulations, lot coverage, bulk or landscaping restrictions. Uniqueness: odd shape, small size, wetland, creek, natural features, big trees or slopes.

The applicant must present evidence to show that if the zoning ordinance is applied strictly, a practical difficulty to the applicant will result, and that all four of the following requirements are met: (please answer all four).

- a) That the ordinance restrictions unreasonable prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose.

The new setback code requiring a minimum of 10' 0" on one side and 25' 0" total between both sides would reduce width of the proposed addition by approximately 5' 0". This would limit our ability to add an additional bedroom, bathroom and laundry room without losing significant square footage of the backyard or patio.

- b) That the variance would do substantial justice to the applicant as well as to other property owners in the district, and a lesser relaxation than that requested would not give substantial relief to the owner of the property or be more consistent with justice to other property owners.

Obtaining this variance would enable us to build a life-long home for our family with an adequate number of bedrooms and bathrooms as well as main floor laundry facilities.

This project was discussed with immediate neighbors at 1171 S Renaud – they are okay with the proposed addition as it extends the wall of the existing house and does not come any closer to the property line. The same neighbors also received a similar variance for a past bedroom addition.

- c) That the plight of the landowner is due to the unique circumstances of the property.

The house was originally built based on the old setback code of 8' 0" minimum on one side and 20' 0" total between the two sides.

- d) That the alleged hardship has not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.

This situation is a result of the house being built to the original setback code and the size of the concrete patio built by the previous owner.

When granting any variance, the Board must ensure that the spirit of the ordinance is observed, public safety secured, and substantial justice done.

5. Interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance is requested because:

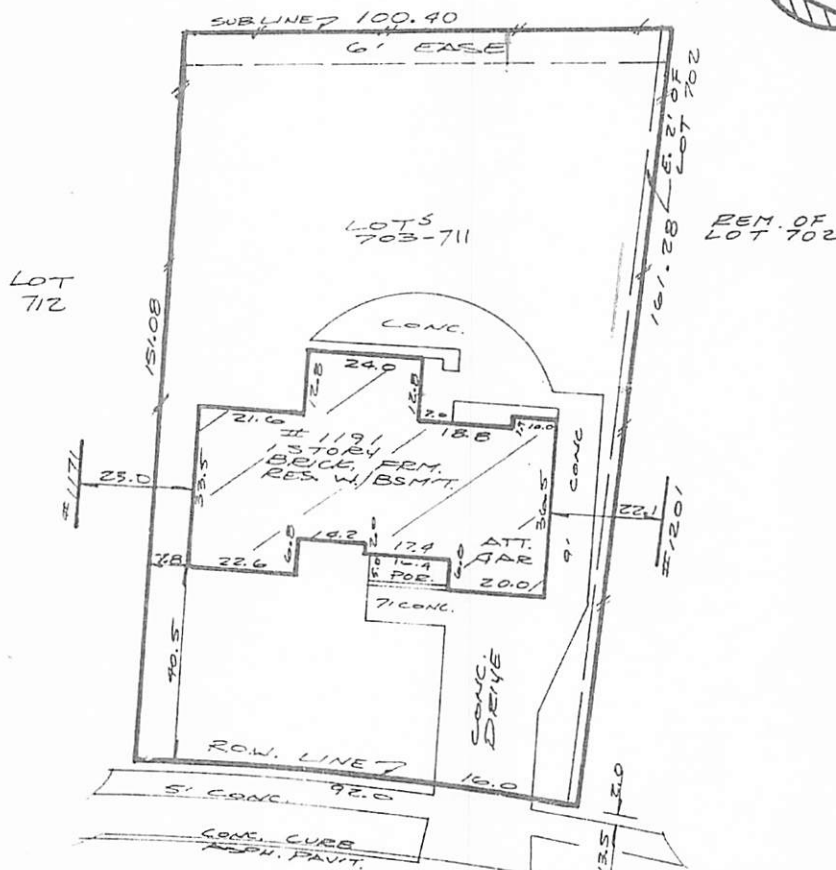
As lifelong Grosse Pointe Woods residents, my wife and I feel there is no better place to raise a family. Having this variance granted would enable us to expand the house to accommodate our young (and potentially still growing) family. It would also enable us to build a space that is more livable for the elderly - aging parents if needed in the short term and/or ourselves long term.

Certified to: Standard Federal Bank



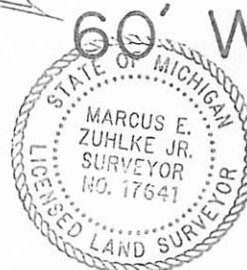
Applicant: JOSEPH AND KAREN SIMON

Property Description:
The East 2 feet of Lot 702 and all of Lots 703 through 711;
RENMOR PARK NO. 3, a subdivision of P.C. 611, Village of Grosse
Pointe Woods (now City of Grosse Pointe Woods), Wayne County,
Michigan, as recorded in Liber 71 of Plats, Page 12 of Wayne
County Records.



S. RENAUD RD. 60' WD

CERTIFICATE: We hereby certify that we have surveyed the above-described property in accordance with the description furnished for the purpose of a mortgage loan to be made by the forementioned applicants, mortgagor, and that the buildings located thereon do not encroach on the adjoining property, nor do the buildings on the adjoining property encroach upon the property heretofore described, except as shown. This survey is not to be used for the purpose of establishing property lines, nor for construction purposes, no stakes having been set at any of the boundary corners.



91-03281
JOB NO. _____ SCALE 1" = 30'
DATE 03/11/91 DR. BY DA

KEM-TEC
LAND SURVEYORS

16041 EAST NINE MILE ROAD
EAST DETROIT, MI 48021
(313) 772-2222
FAX 772-4048



CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS

20025 Mack Plaza Drive
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236-2397

November 5th, 2025

RE: PB250452 1191 S. Renaud Rd., Grosse Pointe Woods, MI, 48236

Dear Council Members,

The Grosse Pointe Woods Building Department recently received a permit application for an addition to a home in the R-1A Residential Zoning District.

*Grosse Pointe Woods Zoning Ordinance. 50-3.1.A, R-1A One-Family Residential. 4. Development standards. **Setbacks (in feet) - Minimum front yard: 40, Minimum side yard Least one: 10 Total of two: 25, Minimum rear yard: 28***

The existing nonconforming side yard setback at the east lot line of 1191 S. Renaud Rd is 7 foot 10 inches. The proposed addition would maintain the current nonconforming side yard setback.

Based on the provided information and discussion with the homeowner, the Building Department recommends approval of the variance to build the new addition.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Collins

Building Official

City of Grosse Pointe Woods



CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
20025 Mack Plaza Drive
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236-2397

From: James Kowalski, Director of Public Services
Date : November 3, 2025
Subject : Variance Request – 1191 S.Renaud

I have reviewed the plans for the proposed construction of the addition to the existing single-family home.

The examined plot plan shows this construction will not infringe upon any public utilities and is therefore permissible under Department of Public Services standards.

Sincerely,

James Kowalski
Department of Public Services
City of Grosse Pointe Woods



**CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

Date: November 10, 2025

To: Grosse Pointe Woods Planning Commission

From: John G. Kosanke, Public Safety Director

Subject: 1191 S. Renaud-Variance Request to Construct Addition to Existing Home

I have reviewed the proposed site plan request for a variance in order to add an addition to the rear of the home at 1191 S. Renaud. The site plan does not have a negative impact on Public Safety Operations.