Hamburg Township
a great place to grow

10405 Merrill Road
P.O. Box 157
Hamburg, MI 48139
(810) 231-1000
www.hamburg.mi.us

Supervisor Pat Hohl **Clerk** Mike Dolan **Treasurer** Jason Negri **Trustees** Bill Hahn, Patricia Hughes, Chuck Menzies, Cindy Michniewicz

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING

Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 6:00 PM
Hamburg Township Hall Board Room

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Appointed Chair Trustee Hardesty called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Approval motion made by Member Galbraith, seconded by Member Muir, to appoint Trustee Hardesty to serve as Chair for tonight's ZBA Meeting.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (2) Absent: (2)

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD
Members PRESENT:
Kevin Galbraith, Alternative
Joanna Hardesty, Trustee
Ron Muir, PC Rep

ABSENT:
Brian Ignatowski, Chair
Benedict Russell
William Rill

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval motion made by Member Muir, seconded by Member Galbraith, to approve Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda for tonight as presented.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (3) Absent: (2)

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

GENERAL CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Chair Trustee Hardesty opened the general call to the public, but no one came up to speak so she closed the session.

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. **ZBA 26-0011**

   Owners: Christopher & Deanna Bimer
   Location: 10202 Buhl Rd.
   Parcel ID: 4715-27-101-023
   Request: Variance application to permit the construction of a single bay garage. Variance request for a 3.5-foot front yard setback where 25-foot front yard setback is required per Section 36-171 (D).

Chair Trustee Hardest invited the applicant Christopher Bimer up to the podium to discuss his variance request. He explained that the existing garage wasn't designed for today's larger vehicle. Their present full-sized truck will not fit into the existing garage, so they must park it outside in the front yard or driveway. By expanding the existing garage, they can then park their present family vehicle inside the garage. It will improve the appearance of the home and the neighborhood. It would make a difference for their family during our Michigan winters.

Chair Trustee Hardesty opened the meeting to public comment on this ZBA variance case. Since no one came forward, she closed the public comment portion of the meeting. Hardesty then opened the meeting to David Rohr to brief the members on his staff report. David mentioned that he had spoken to Christopher's neighbor who supported this project. David mentioned that the neighbor's only concern was that he didn't want anyone to park in front of the new garage's expanded bay since it would block his existing driveway entrance to his home. They have a shared driveway. David said this was a modest request and he supported this request.

Hardesty then opened the meeting to the ZBA board members for discussion. Member Muir asked the applicant why he was requesting a 30-foot-deep garage bay when the standard bay is 20-24 feet. Christopher said that they had a full-sized truck and that the size was needed to be able to unload and load the truck while accessing the home. The front yard setback is from the property line. Christopher walked a site plan that showed the driveway was county property so they would not plan to park there. When he showed the site plan to Trustee Hardesty, she said that there is nothing to stop people from parking in that area even if it is county property. She said she understood the neighbor's concern. The applicant said he assured the neighbor that no one would be allowed to park there. Trustee Hardesty reminded the ZBA members that they were charged with the responsibility of granting the least possible variance to correct a practical difficulty. Hardesty continued to say that she doesn't see a practical difficulty here. This is a narrow lot with an already existing garage. She said it will negatively impact the neighbor and his line of sight.

Approval motion made by Member Muir, seconded by Member Galbraith, to approve the variance to permit the addition of a new single-bay garage with a front yard setback of 3.5 ft where 25-foot setback is required per Section 36-171 (D).

The variances meet variance standards one (1) through seven (7) of Section 36-137 of the Hamburg Township Zoning Ordinance, and a practical difficulty exists on the subject site when strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance standards is applied, as discussed at the meeting this evening and as presented in the staff report.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (2) **Nay: (1)** Hardesty **Absent: (2)**

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

2. **ZBA 26-0012**

Owners: LaVida Investments, LLC
Location: 10469 Hickory Dr.
Parcel ID: 4715-28-402-031
Request: Variance application to permit the construction of an addition and deck to an existing home. Variance requests for a side (north) setback of 4 feet where 5 feet is required per Section 36-171 (D) and other side (south) setback of 6.6 feet where 10 feet is required per Section 36-171 (D).

Chair Trustee Hardesty invited the builder Mike Berrien to the podium. He explained that the Strawberry Lake lots are known for their very odd shapes, and narrow long parcels. The way the garage and the home are positioned on the lot currently, they mirror one of the property lines. They want to maintain the aesthetics of the south side when expanding the home to modernize it. Mike said he spoke with both neighbors on each side of this property, and both were in full support of this project. They were glad to see the current home being updated. He provided copies of the letters of support from these neighbors.

Chair Trustee Hardesty opened the meeting to public comment on this ZBA variance case. Since no one came forward, she closed the public comment portion of the meeting. Hardesty then opened the meeting to David Rohr to brief the members on his staff report. David agreed that these lake lots are unusually long, narrow, and oddly shaped. The structures are very far away from the water. The home is very constrained due to the retaining walls on either side of the home. David agreed that the applicant is trying to keep the addition in line with the aesthetics of the neighborhood and other existing homes. He said that this is a reasonable variance request. Trustee Hardesty asked if this variance request would be making this lot more non-conforming. David said no. The areas of expansion are towards the water, everything else is within the building envelope.

Chair Trustee Hardesty opened the meeting up to the ZBA members for questions and discussion. Member Galbraith asked the applicant if the 4-foot variance request was really 5 feet. Mike explained that with his current measurements, that building should be about 4.10 feet from the side property line. He is just asking for an addition 1 foot variance at the front corner post to ensure that he will not encroach on that side. Trustee Hardesty stated there were two letters of support for this project. One is

from Randall Smith who lives at 10453 Hickory, and the other letter was from Peggy & Mark Davis who live at 10477 Hickory.

Approval motion made by Member Galbraith, seconded by Member Muir, to approve variance application to permit the construction of an addition and deck to existing home. Variance requests include side (north) setback of 4 feet where 5 feet is required, per Section 36-171 (D) and side (south) setback of 6.6 feet where 10 feet is required, per Section 36-171 (D).

The variances meet variance standards one (1) through seven (7) of Section 36-137 of the Hamburg Township Zoning Ordinance, and a practical difficulty exists on the subject site when strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance standards is applied, as discussed at the meeting this evening and as presented in the staff report.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (3) Absent: (2)

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

3. **ZBA 26-0013**

   Owners: Caryn Burke
   Location: 10526 Monticello Rd.
   Parcel ID: 4715-29-402-179
   Request: Variance application to permit the construction of a detached carport. Variance requests for a front yard setback of 2.4 feet where 25 feet front yard setback is required, per Section 36-171 (D) and an accessory building roof setback from other structures to be 2 feet where 10 feet is required when detached, per Section 36-215 (6).

Chair Trustee Hardesty invited the applicant Caryn to the podium to discuss the variance request. Caryn said the existing home is very close to the street, so they do not have a lot of space on either side of the home for any parking. She said they are currently parking in the street, and during the winter parking on the street wouldn't be practical. Currently they have a single car garage where they are storing a lot of household items. She said they just moved here in June 2026. Caryn said she spoke to both of her neighbors, and they support this proposal. They are upgrading the 1920's home. She also shared that she got support from the home association.

Chair Trustee Hardesty opened the meeting to public comment on this ZBA variance case. Nick the architect came up to the podium. Nick lives at 2937 Key Street, Jackson, Michigan. Nick stated that the homeowners are healthcare workers who need to do a lot of traveling during the winter. The carport will not obstruct any lake view since it will be built in front of the house. This project will aesthetically match the rest of the neighborhood. No other people came up to the podium to speak so Hardesty closed the public comment portion of the meeting. Hardesty then opened the meeting to David Rohr to brief the members on his staff report. David agreed there is no room on the parcel to build any kind of large structure. A shrub hedgerow fence line also is limiting the parcel's space for parking. This parcel would not allow for 10 ft of space between the carport and the existing home. David said that he supports this reasonable variance request.

Chair Trustee Hardesty opened the meeting up to the ZBA members for questions and discussion. Member Galbraith welcomed Caryn to the township. Member Muir asked the applicant if the 2 ft between the carport and the home would be a sidewalk. Caryn said she believed it would act as a covered patio for the front entrance. She said that they don't have a sidewalk or a covered porch for anyone to stand under if it was raining. Chair Trustee Hardesty asked how many cars they would park under the carport. Caryn said one. Caryn said that they were planning to take out some of the overgrown hedge to allow more space for them to access and drive into the carport. Hardesty asked if she was concerned with blocking the front entrance to the home. Caryn said that their plan would be to clean out the existing garage so that one car could park inside it, and the second car would be under the carport. Hardesty asked David if he received any letters or phone calls of support for this variance. He said no. Caryn's partner walked a letter of support from the White Lodge Association (WLA) for this variance request up to the ZBA board member's table. Trustee Hardesty read the letter outloud.

Approval motion made by Member Muir, seconded by Member Galbraith, to approve variance application to permit the construction of a detached carport. Variance requests for a front yard setback of 2.4 feet where 25 feet front yard setback is required, per Section 36-171 (D) and an accessory building roof setback from other structures to be 2 feet where 10 feet is required when detached, per Section 36-215 (6).

The variances meet variance standards one (1) through seven (7) of Section 36-137 of the Hamburg Township Zoning Ordinance, and a practical difficulty exists on the subject site when strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance standards is applied, as discussed at the meeting this evening and as presented in the staff report.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (3) Absent: (2)

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

Approval motion made by Member Galbraith, seconded by Member Muir, to approve the September 9, 2026, ZBA Meeting Minutes as presented.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (3) Absent: (2)

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

Approval motion made by Member Muir, seconded by Member Galbraith, to adjourn at 6:31 pm.

Voice Vote: Ayes: (3) Absent: (2)

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Perschke

Planning/Zoning Coordinator & Recording Secretary

David Rohr

Planning & Zoning Director

The minutes were approved as presented/corrected: _____

_____

Brian Ignatowski, Chair