

mean any departure from the operation or use described in the approved application or any change that may cause external impacts such as additional traffic, hours of operation, noise, additional outdoor storage, or display.

## Section 15.06 Variances and Appeals

1. **Administrative Appeals.** The Zoning Board of Appeals shall have the power to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged by the applicant that there is an error in any order, requirement, permit, decision, or interpretation made by the Planning and Zoning Administrator, zoning enforcement officer, or any other administrative official, board or commission in carrying out or enforcing any provision of this Ordinance, except where this Ordinance prohibits Zoning Board of Appeal Action (e.g. direct appeal to Circuit Court).
  - A. An appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals based in whole or in part on the provisions of this Ordinance may be taken by any person, firm or corporation aggrieved or by any governmental officer, department, board or bureau affected by the decision of the building inspector aggrieved by the decision, order, requirement, or determination made by the Planning and Zoning Administrator, Technical Review Committee, Planning Commission, zoning enforcement officer, or other administrative official or board or commission tasked with administering or enforcing the provisions of this Ordinance. Such appeal shall be taken by filing a notice of appeal with the Planning and Zoning Administrator on appropriate forms provided by the Community and Economic Development Department. The Planning and Zoning Administrator shall transmit all papers constituting the records of such appeal to the board. The board may require the applicant to furnish such surveys, plans or other information as may be required for the proper consideration of the matter. Upon a hearing before the board, any person or party may appear in person, or by agent, or by attorney.
  - B. **Time for Appeal.** An appeal shall be filed to the Planning and Zoning Administrator within thirty (30) days from the date listed on the Notice of Action referring to the order, requirement, decision, or determination which is the subject of the appeal.
  - C. The Zoning Board of Appeals shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing of the appeal and give due notice thereof to in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006 (as amended) and [Section 15.01](#).
  - D. The board may reverse or affirm wholly or partly or may modify the order, requirement, decision or determination as, in its opinion, ought to be made in the premises and, to that end, shall have all the powers of the officer from whom the appeal is taken. The concurring decision of a majority of the members of the board shall be necessary to reverse an order, requirement, decision or determination of an administrative officer or body, or to decide in favor of the applicant a matter upon which they are required to pass under an ordinance, or to effect a variation in an ordinance. An appeal shall stay all proceedings in furtherance of the action appealed from unless the building inspector certifies to the Zoning Board of appeals after notice of appeal shall have been filed with him that by reason of facts stated in the certificates a stay would cause imminent peril to life and property, in which case the proceedings shall not be stayed otherwise than by a restraining order which shall be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals or by the Circuit Court on application, on notice of the building inspector and on due cause shown.
2. **Variances.** The ZBA shall have the power to authorize, upon application, specific variances from such dimensional requirements as lot area and width regulations, building height and square foot regulations, yard width and depth regulations; such requirements as off-street parking and loading space, requirements, sign regulations and other similar requirements as specified in the Ordinance, provided such modifications will not be inconsistent with the purpose and intent of such requirements. In granting a variance, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall make findings that a "practical difficulty" has been shown by the applicant by finding that all of the following requirements have been met by the applicant's petition:
  - A. That strict compliance with area, setbacks, frontage, height, bulk, or density would unreasonably prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose, and would thereby render the conformity unnecessarily burdensome for other than financial reasons; and
  - B. That a variance will provide and preserve a substantial property right similar to that possessed by other properties within the same zoning district and in the neighboring area, provided that possible increased financial return shall not of itself be deemed sufficient to warrant a variance; and

- C. That plight of the owner is due to the unique circumstances of the property, such as the shape of the parcel, unique topographic or environmental conditions, or any other physical situation on the land, building or structure deemed by the Zoning Board of Appeals to be extraordinary; and
- D. That the requested variance is the minimum amount necessary to permit reasonable use of the land, building or structure; and
- E. That the authorization of such variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent properties and will not materially impair the intent and purpose of this Ordinance or the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community; and
- F. That the need for the requested variance is not the result of actions of the property owner or previous property owners (self-created).

In granting any variance, the Zoning Board of Appeals may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in conformity with this Ordinance, provided that said conditions:

- (1) Are designed to protect natural resources, the health, safety, and welfare and social and economic well-being of the public; and
- (2) Are necessary to meet the intent and purpose of this Ordinance, are related to the standards established in the section for the land use or activity under consideration and are necessary to ensure compliance with those standards.

- 3. **Use Variances Prohibited.** The Zoning Board of Appeals shall not have the authority to grant a use variance to permit a use that is not permitted in a zoning district. However, the Zoning Board of Appeals may consider expansions or alterations of non-conforming uses in accordance with [Section 13.01](#).
- 4. **Approval Period.**
  - A. No order of the Zoning Board of Appeals permitting the erection or alteration of buildings shall be valid for a period longer than one year unless a building permit for such erection or alteration is obtained within such period and such erection or alteration is commenced and proceeds to completion in accordance with the terms of such permit.
  - B. No order of the Zoning Board of Appeals permitting a use of a building or premises shall be valid for a period longer than one year unless such use is established within such period; provided, however, that the use of such permit is dependent upon the erection or alteration of a building, such order shall continue in full force and effect if a building permit for such use, erection or alteration is obtained within such period and such erections or alterations are commenced and proceed to completion in accordance with the terms of such permit.
- 5. **Appeals of Decisions to Circuit Court.** The decision of the ZBA shall be final. An appeal of a decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals shall be taken to the Oakland County Circuit Court within a time period specified in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (P.A. 110 of 2006, as amended) and by such persons permitted by State statute and common law. Upon appeal, the court shall review the record and decision of the ZBA to ensure that the decision complies with the constitution and laws of the state, is based upon proper procedure, is supported by competent, material, and substantial evidence on the record and represents the reasonable exercise of discretion granted by law to the ZBA. As a result of this review required by this Section, the court may affirm or modify the decision of the ZBA.
- 6. **Resubmittal.** No application for a variance which has been denied in whole or in part by the Zoning Board of Appeals shall be re-submitted for a period of three hundred sixty five (365) days from such denial, except on the ground of new evidence or proof of changed conditions found by the Zoning Board of Appeals to be valid.

## Section 15.07 Zoning Ordinance Amendments (Map and Text)

The City Council may amend, supplement, or change the regulations or the district boundaries of this Ordinance pursuant to the authority and according to the procedure set forth in Act 110, of the Public Acts of 2006, as amended. Changes in the text or zoning district boundaries of this Ordinance may be proposed by the Planning Commission, Planning and Zoning Administrator, other City Staff, or any interested person or organization.