

Board of Adjustment Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2025

The Muscatine County Board of Adjustment met in the Board of Supervisors Office on Friday, December 5, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Emily Geertz, Tom Harper, Carol Schlueter, and Michael Smock

Absent: Janelle Spies

Staff Present: Eric Furnas and Morgan Othmer

Others present for this meeting included: Angela Woodhouse, Mike Stych, and Troy Holliday

- **Approval of the October 24, 2025 and October 30, 2025 meeting minutes.**
 - A motion was made by Tom Harper to approve the October 24, 2025 and October 30, 2025 meeting minutes and was seconded by Carol Schlueter.
 - Ayes: Emily Geertz, Tom Harper, Carol Schlueter, Michael Smock
 - Opposed: None
 - Motion approved.

- **Case #25-07-02**
 - Eric explained that the request has been on hold since July. There was state legislation that went through to change the regulations of detached accessory structures in the front yard space. The county then had to complete the process of amending the Zoning Ordinance. Since detached accessory structures are no longer prohibited in the front yard space, the request is only for a variance on the setback distance from the front lot line.
 - Carol asked for clarification on one of the maps in their packets. Eric explained that there was an area highlighted to indicate the approximate location of the septic system and show how much of the backyard space is being used for the septic system, where a detached accessory structure could typically be placed.
 - Eric then reminded the Board that the state made changes for numeric variances. They no longer have to meet a hardship burden. Instead, they must meet a practical difficulty burden, which is a lower legal hurdle. The practical difficulty is still something that is unique to the property and not self-created.
 - Angela spoke next about the request. She explained that they would like to build a single-car garage in front of the current garage. She explained that there are slopes on the property as well as large, mature trees. The new garage would improve the appearance of the property by allowing for more items to be stored inside. The variance request is only for seven feet, so the garage would still be 28' away from the front lot line.
 - A motion was made by Tom Harper to recommend approval of the Variance to allow an accessory structure to be built approximately 28' from the front lot line. Second by Michael Smock.
 - Ayes: Emily Geertz, Tom Harper, Carol Schlueter, Michael Smock

- Opposed: None
- Motion approved.

- **Case #25-07-03**

- Troy Holliday explained that he would like to build a 40' x 56' accessory building. The structure would meet the required front setback distance but would not meet the rear lot line setback. The backyard is next to railroad tracks, and many other structures nearby are close to the rear lot line, so the structure would have minimal impact on the surrounding properties.
- Eric explained that like the previous case, the structure extending into the front yard space is no longer an issue with the new detached accessory structure regulations. There's not much reason to be concerned about this variance changing the characteristics of the neighborhood, as there are many other houses and buildings that do not meet current zoning setbacks. The request was also delayed to allow time for the proposed location to be GPS'd to confirm that the structure would meet the front yard setback. It would be more important to meet the front yard setback as it's adjacent to a state highway right-of-way.
- Emily asked for confirmation that the Board is only considering a variance from the rear lot line. Eric confirmed that was correct and it would be an approximate 15' variance.
- A motion was made by Carol Schlueter to recommend approval of the Variance to allow an accessory structure to be built approximately 25' from the rear lot line.
Second by Tom Harper.
 - Ayes: Emily Geertz, Tom Harper, Carol Schlueter, Michael Smock
 - Opposed: None
 - Motion approved.

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

MUSCATINE COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
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