

Village of Skaneateles
Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing
August 28, 2012

Discussion requested by Mark Ramsgard regarding the expired Variance at the property addressed as 22 West Elizabeth Street in the Village of Skaneateles.

Present: Lisa Banuski, Chairman
John Crompt, Member
Stephen Hartnett, Member
Larry Pardee, Member
Craig Phinney, Member

Dennis Dundon, Clerk to the ZBA

Mark Ramsgard, 22 West Elizabeth St., Applicant

James Lanning, Village Trustee

Absent: Riccardo Galbato, Attorney for the ZBA

Chairman Banuski opened the Discussion at 7:41 pm noting that this is not a Public Hearing, though it is a meeting open to the public.

Mr. Ramsgard introduced himself and presented, “Adam asked me to prepare kind of a quick brief as to what happened and why. We wanted to get the steps and the patio in. And I have some pictures too. Basically, because of the foundation that we built – it’s an insulated Styrofoam foundation – and the contractor highly recommended that we not do anything for a year because of settling. And there’s no way to attach any structural issue to the back of the house.” Chairman Banuski stated, “This expired a year ago. So that was the year that he was talking about; for it to settle. I’m just flipping through here for the pictures, because I’m sure you guys will remember it when you see it. It’s West Elizabeth – quite a big remodel – interior and exterior, but a lot of exterior work was done.” Mr. Ramsgard said, “This is what we are left with. What happened, at the end of the job, my wife and I didn’t realize that where the second floor of the house was going to end up in the back yard ended up being 2 ½ feet above the elevation of the back yard. We didn’t realize that we were going to need this portion of it in there. So we have to get some steps or something in there. Adam has told me that because of code we have to get that. But the contractor, because of the ground settling, he said you can’t get into the house – there’s nothing to attach it to. So he said he wouldn’t touch it and he recommended we not have anybody do anything with it for a year, because of the settling. The ground did drop around where we backfilled around the house.”

Chairman Banuski said, "So the stairs that you are proposing were actually not a part of the original application." Mr. Ramsgard said, "We didn't think we were going to need; what we did I didn't think we were going to need... I got to admit, I didn't realize from the drawings where it was going to end up, where the elevation was where it was. I mean, I didn't include that, it was just kind of..." Chairman Banuski said, "Right; Adam told me this, that this was all something that had been approved initially." Mr. Ramsgard said, "As far as the patio yes. There was a patio and a..." Chairman Banuski asked, "So are you building the patio now too?" Mr. Ramsgard said, "Yeah, we're just wanting to complete the whole thing." Chairman Banuski, "So the patio was going to be flush against the house and you were going to, without stairs, just walk out onto the patio. So there is no change in coverage, correct?" Mr. Ramsgard said, "No. If anything it's less."

Member Phinney said, "I know the house." Member Hartnett said, "I have known Mark for quite a while; I was in the house before the fix and after the remodel. And yes, it definitely will need some steps – he has two young kids." Member Crompt said, "Myself also. I know Mark pretty good and I have seen the project. I know he's trying to do a lot of it himself, too, and I can understand when you dig a foundation like that you are going to want to let it settle before you do something else." Chairman Banuski said, "I'm only familiar with it as I ride my bike and look at it."

Chairman Banuski said, "I will move that we grant this extension and modification to include steps down to the patio. The applicant will have one year to complete." Member Crompt said, "I will second that."

Upon unanimous vote of the members present in favor of the motion, the Chairman declared "The motion is passed."

Chairman Banuski asked, "Will the patio be in – all that stuff will be done by then?" Mr. Ramsgard said, "that was his recommendation. The first person wanted to do it in a step one, step two phase – but it doesn't make sense to do that. It's better to do it all at once. So his recommendation was why don't you go and try to get this done, and we'll just do it all at once." Chairman Banuski, "Very good. Thank you for coming in." Mr. Ramsgard, "I appreciate your patience over all these years and all these issues."

After the Applicant left, Member Hartnett said, "For things like this, I like your idea of (a) I absolutely agree that we ought to have limits on expirations. And unfortunately with Weitsman we granted it after it had expired. I think we need to kind of be careful with this, and I agree with you about checking with Rick, about any policy for furthers." Member Phinney said, "To have to reapply in contrast to being extended -- even if it's the same work." Member Hartnett said, "Otherwise we can get ourselves in a bit of a crack with that." Chairman Banuski said, "I'll pursue that with him before our next month's meeting." Member Crompt said, "That's a good idea, Lisa." Chairman Banuski said, "I did say to Adam that I am not approving these over the telephone. To me these are for the Board to decide in each case. So we will have a unified voice with these and a basic policy as we go forward." Member Hartnett said, "Which I think is pretty important. Adam should know that. Hey, heads up. You realize that this expires and you better

come in before it expires to get an extension or you might get turned down. Highly probable turned down.”

The Chairman closed this proceeding at 7:47 pm.