

**CITY OF OAK PARK, MICHIGAN  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
NOVEMBER 28, 2017  
MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairperson Landau in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 14000 Oak Park Boulevard, Oak Park, MI 48237 and Roll Call was made.

PRESENT: Vice Chairperson Huston  
Commissioner Anderson  
Commissioner Barton  
Commissioner Blumenkopf  
Commissioner Peiss  
Commissioner Seligson

ABSENT: Chairperson Landau

OTHERS  
PRESENT: City Planner Kevin Rulkowski  
Community & Economic Development Director Marrone  
Deputy City Clerk Lisa Vecchio

**APPROVAL OF ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MINUTES OF OCTOBER 24, 2017**

**MOTION BY Peiss, SECONDED BY Seligson**, to approve the meeting minutes of October 24, 2017 as submitted

Vote: Yes: Anderson, Blumenkopf, Barton, Huston, Peiss, Seligson  
No: None

**MOTION DECLARED ADOPTED**

**COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

a) **CASE 17-09:**

**APPLICANT:**

BM Ventures, Value Wholesale  
15188 Eight Mile Road  
Oak Park, Michigan

**PROPERTY:**

15188 Eight Mile Road  
Property Identification Number: 25-31-351-034, -035, -036

**ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS AND REQUEST:**

Three variances are requested:

1. Article XVII, Section 1716, B, 5, requires interior landscaping of at least ten (10) % of the total lot. The applicant is requesting a waiver of 13,401 square feet of interior landscaping to allow for 15,601 square feet of interior landscaping to be provided.
2. Article XVII, Section 1716, B, 6, requires parking lot landscaping of five (5) square feet for each parking space. The applicant is requesting a waiver of 368 square feet of parking lot landscaping to allow for 137 square feet of parking lot landscaping to be provided.
3. Article XVIII, Section 1802, A, permits only on-site signs. The applicant is requesting a waiver of to allow for an off-site sign to be placed on an adjacent property.

**STAFF FINDINGS OF FACT:**

- 1) The subject parcel is zoned LI, Light Industrial District.
- 2) Article XVII, Section 1716, B, 5, requires interior landscaping of at least ten (10) % of the total lot.  
The applicant is requesting a waiver of 13,401 square feet of interior landscaping to allow for 15,601 square feet of interior landscaping to be provided.
- 3) Article XVII, Section 1716, B, 6, requires parking lot landscaping of five (5) square feet for each parking space.
- 4) The applicant is requesting a waiver of 368 square feet of parking lot landscaping to allow for 137 square feet of parking lot landscaping to be provided.
- 5) Article XVIII, Section 1802, A, permits only on-site signs.
- 6) The applicant is requesting a waiver of to allow for an off-site sign to be placed on an adjacent property.
- 7) The subject property is a key hole shaped lot, 1,164 feet deep with 187.9 feet of frontage on Eight Mile. Approximately 560 feet back from the southern property line the property widens to 312 feet.
- 8) The primary orientation of the building faces Eight Mile Road.  
At the November 13, 2017 meeting the Planning Commission approved a Site Plan for two additions to the current warehouse facility at 15188 Eight Mile Road. The two additions of 4,505 square feet and 34,716 square feet will connect what are currently three buildings into one 146,814 square foot warehouse. The Planning Commission made their approval subject to the Zoning Board of Appeals granting the necessary variances.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The applicant BM Ventures, Value Wholesale, is requesting variances from providing the required minimum amount of landscaping. The Site Plan (Received 11/1/17) indicates new landscaping in the front of the building on Eight Mile Road. However, the identified landscaped areas of 15,601 square feet are less than the 29,002 required by the City

Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, 505 square feet of parking lot landscaping is required and the Site Plan (Received 11/1/17) shows only 137 square feet.

The Department has communicated with the project engineers that the landscaping in the front of the building should be enhanced as a tradeoff to providing less overall landscaped areas. Additionally, possibly removing a couple of parking spaces near Eight Mile Road to create some landscaped islands might enhance the appearance of the front of the site. Attached is a new landscaped area proposal (Received 11/15/17) that shows:

1. The total of all landscaped areas increasing from 15,601 square feet to 16,403 square feet.
2. An increase in parking lot landscaping from 137 square feet to 853 square feet mainly from two new landscaped islands near the Eight Mile front of the property. Since 495 square feet of parking lot landscaping is required, this variance is no longer necessary.

Although, this is a significant reduction in the amount of required landscaping, consideration could be given to the fact the subject property is extraordinarily deep in length (1,164 feet). One of the purposes of the landscaping provision is to create an attractive appearance from the street for commercial and industrial properties. In this case, due to the extraordinarily deep distance of the lot, no good purpose would be served by providing landscaping where no one could view it.

In this case, strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance provisions could possibly result in a reduction in the size of the proposed addition, while not serving any useful purpose. In this case, conformity with the Zoning Ordinances minimum landscaping provisions could be determined to be unnecessarily burdensome. Because this is a question of unique circumstances of the property, an argument for a practical difficulty could be demonstrated.

Additionally the applicant is requesting a variance to allow for an off-premise sign to be located on the adjacent property to the east, near Eight Mile Road. The applicant's loading docks are on the east side of their building and all truck traffic to the facility utilizes a shared driveway off of Eight Mile Road. To help trucks trying to locate the driveway to the warehouse loading docks, the applicant is requesting a monument style sign be permitted on the adjacent property to the east. The applicant has an agreement with the adjacent property owner to allow a sign to be placed on their property near Eight Mile Road.

In this case, strict compliance with the Zoning Ordinance provisions might be unnecessarily burdensome. In addition, granting a variance in this circumstance might resolve potential traffic conflicts. Because this is a question of unique circumstances of the property, an argument for a practical difficulty could be demonstrated.

Taking the above discussion and findings of fact into consideration, it is the recommendation of the Planning Division to approve the variances requested.

**MOTION BY Huston, SECONDED BY Seligson:** that based on the information presented in the Planning Division Report, and additional findings of fact discussed during the review of case # 17-09, I move to **approve** the request

of BM Ventures, Value Wholesale, 15188 Eight Mile Road,

- 1) for a waiver of 12,599 square feet from the provisions in Article XVII, Section 1716, B, 5, to allow for 16,403 square feet of interior landscaping to be provided.
- 2) for a waiver from the provisions in Article XVIII, Section 1802, A, to allow for an off-site monument style sign on the adjacent property to the east near Eight Mile Road.

**VOTE:** Yes: Barton, Blumenkopf, Huston, Peiss, Seligson, Anderson  
No: None

**MOTION CARRIED**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no objections, Vice Chairperson Huston adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

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Lisa Vecchio, Deputy City Clerk/Director of Elections