



*The Macalester-Groveland Community Council fosters citizen participation in government and community decisions that make our neighborhood a great place to live, work, learn, and play.*

## **Minutes - 6/10/2020 Special HLU Meeting**

### **Housing and Land Use Committee (“HLU”) Macalester-Groveland Community Council (“MGCC”)**

**Date:** Wed. June 10th, 2020 at 7:40pm  
**Location:** Held remotely via Zoom  
**Chair:** Mike Moore  
**Secretary:** (Open Position)  
**Staff:** Alexa Golemo

**Note:** Two separate meetings were held via Zoom on Wed. evening, 6/10/2020. These minutes are for the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, regarding a variance request for 1276 Goodrich Ave.

**Attendees:**

**Staff:**

Alexa Golemo

**Committee Members:**

Art Punyko	Cathy Plessner	Cindy Radtke	Colin Fesser
Jack Fei	Julie Kaupa	Kate Baxter-Kauf	Kateri Routh
Kensy Lipstreuer	Marc Manderscheid	Mike Moore (chair)	Mike Sonn
Ross Gregerson	Tom Dietsche		

**Guest(s):**

Cory Sullivan (Homeowner at 1276 Goodrich Ave.)

## **AGENDA**

**7:40pm I. Introductions**

Mike spoke to the goals, process and responsibilities of the committee.  
Mike and Alexa explained Zoom procedures for speaking and voting.

**7:41pm II. Addition/Deletion of agenda items**

There are no agenda additions or changes.  
There is just one variance request to consider in this special HLU meeting.  
Tom Dietsche volunteered to be acting secretary for this meeting.

**7:42pm III. Approval of Minutes**

This being a special meeting, no minutes of prior meetings were considered.

**7:42pm IV. Variance Application for 1276 Goodrich Avenue**

**Introduction**

Cory Sullivan, a homeowner at 1276 Goodrich Ave who is requesting this variance, gave an introductory visual presentation with an overview and explanation of the proposed project and the need for this variance.

- Thanks to the committee for making time on such short notice, he only recently became aware of the variance process.
- He and his wife have lived here 17 years, with a new child born 3 years ago, want living space for her.
- Also would like to have room for their parents to be cared for and live with them if needed.
- So they want to add more living space by replacing the garage with a new one that has additional living space above it.
- They could do this by building the new garage 25 feet from the alley, but that would eliminate a lot of green space between the garage and the house.
- They need a variance if they build closer to the alley and connect the garage and house with a covered passageway.
- City code requires a 25 feet setback from the alley for a connected garage.
- The current garage setback is 8 feet, looking at a 16 feet setback for the new one.
- Main reason for a variance is have more green space between the house and the garage.

**Committee member questions to the homeowner**

Mike Sonn: Any feedback from neighbors?

Cory: Adjacent neighbors on Syndicate (to the west), on Goodrich, and across the alley have all given positive written approvals. We've been working on this for two and a half years to make sure we are doing everything right, to meet city codes and be architecturally sound and match the neighborhood. Want the garage setback variance so we don't have to move the garage 25 feet back and lose all the green space between it and the house. Will be using permeable paving for the garage driveway, stones with permeable gravel separating them.

Mike Sonn: So this breezeway is along the existing 6' fence and won't add any additional obstruction of the view, is that right?

Cory: Yes, that's correct.

Alexa read one letter received today from a neighbor on James avenue.

They are opposed to this variance because:

- it is one long wall along the sidewalk on the street side
- it is a poor design that eliminates green space
- doesn't match the neighborhood especially being on a corner
- these developers are ruining the neighborhood

Cory: That neighbor lives 3/4 mile away and has some facts wrong, the passageway will not be where she said. It will be on the east side, along the fence, not along the open street side. There's a house on Syndicate near Juliet or Palace that "court-yarded" their property as well. That was used as a model for what they want to do. They are also sloping the roof line down to 8 feet to reduce shading on the neighbor on the other side of the fence who has a similar garage with living space. The difference is that theirs will be closer to the house and will have a 5' wide breezeway with a roof sloping from 10' to 8' high.

Mike Moore: Will you keep the tree?

Cory: No, the tree has to go, they'd love to keep it but it's 114 years old and is deteriorating. They will be replacing it with 2 new trees, maybe maples and not so tall.

Current one is 50 feet tall and hangs over their house and the neighbor's house and is a risk.

Jack: What will the new structures look like and what will the rear setback variance be.

Cory: Will be a larger new addition (17' by 26') replacing the current garage, with a 34 foot breezeway with lots of glass between house and the new living space & garage, along the fence.

Marc: This is shown as non-homestead property, but you've lived there 17 years?

Cory: This is a city mistake they still haven't been able to get fixed, since moving there in 2003. It's possibly because his mother co-signed the original mortgage. But she lived in Woodbury so they deemed it non-homestead property. They have lived there all that time.

#### **Motion:**

Jack: Made a motion to recommend approval of this variance.

Cathy: Seconded.

#### **Comments on the motion:**

Marc: Since this is essentially a teardown of the garage and new construction, his first impression was that he would not like it. But then he walked by and saw how the house is positioned on the lot. All the neighboring properties are very large and tall, the fence is already there, this design keeps it open toward Syndicate. This is really a hybrid, it's a courtyard design and the breezeway is low. Taking all the factors into consideration, in this rare instance, despite being a teardown, he is in favor of this variance.

Mike Moore: This is somewhat like an ADU, and it preserves green space.

Art: If they moved the garage in 25 feet to avoid a variance, you'd be adding a lot of paved space and there would be much less green space. Appreciates the homeowner presenting a thoughtful and reasonable rationale for needing this variance, unlike many developers who come before us. Would definitely support it.

Cory: They love the neighborhood and really want to live here, but if they can't do this and need to care for their in-laws, they would need to relocate. Have spent over two years getting this plan approved in order to stay here, not intending to improve the property in order to sell it.

Ross: Is it considered attached because the breezeway will be heated and insulated?

Cory: Yes it will be heated, so it's definitely considered attached. It's a passageway to a garage door with stairs to living space above it, so it's considered part of the house. Not designed as a secondary residence or space that can be rented out, just part of their house.

**Vote called on the motion:**

“The Housing and Land Use Committee of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council recommends approval of the rear yard setback variance request of 9’ for the property at 1276 Goodrich Avenue, Reference No. 20-038477.”

**Vote Results:**

10 ayes, 2 abstentions, the motion carries

**8:06pm V. Conclusion**

Alexa: This motion will go before the full MGCC Board tomorrow (Thursday) night, and if it is approved there, then it will be forwarded to the city’s BZA committee as our recommendation.

**8:06pm VI. Adjourn**

Chair Mike Moore declared the meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tom Dietsche (acting secretary) on 6/13/2020.