



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

45175 Ten Mile Road
Novi, MI 48375
(248) 347-0415 Phone
(248) 735-5600 Facsimile
www.cityofnovi.org

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS STAFF REPORT

FOR: City of Novi Zoning Board of Appeal **MEETING DATE:** December 9, 2025

REGARDING: **623 South Lake Drive #50-22-03-455-001 (PZ25-0063)**

BY: Alan Hall, Deputy Director Community Development

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Applicant

Zach Gielow

Variance Type

Dimensional Variance

Property Characteristics

Zoning District: This property is zoned One-Family Residential (R-4)

Location: west of Novi Road, north of Shawood Lake

Parcel #: 50-22-03-455-001

Request

The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.5 for a rear yard setback of 6.9 ft (35 ft required, variance of 28.1 ft); for a side yard setback of .5 ft (10 ft required, variance of 9.5 ft); for a side yard aggregate total of 15 ft (40 ft required, variance of 25 ft); for 50% lot coverage (25% allowed, variance of 25%); and a third-floor addition exceeding the maximum building height of 2.5 stories.

II. STAFF COMMENTS:

The applicant is seeking (5) dimensional variances to remove an existing detached garage and construct a new addition with an attached garage and living area above.

- 1) 28.1-foot rear yard setback variance
- 2) 9.5-foot side yard setback variance
- 3) 25-foot side yard aggregate variance
- 4) 25% lot coverage variance
- 5) Third floor building height variance exceeding 2-1/2 stories.

III. RECOMMENDATION:

The Zoning Board of Appeals may take one of the following actions:

1. I move that we **grant** the variance in Case No. **PZ25-0063**, sought by _____, for _____ because Petitioner has shown practical difficulty requiring _____.

(a) Without the variance Petitioner will be unreasonably prevented or limited with respect to use of the property because _____.

(b) The property is unique because _____.

(c) Petitioner did not create the condition because _____.

(d) The relief granted will not unreasonably interfere with adjacent or surrounding properties because _____.

(e) The relief is consistent with the spirit and intent of the ordinance because _____.

(f) The variance granted is subject to:

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.

2. I move that we **deny** the variance in Case No. **PZ25-0063** sought by _____, for _____ because Petitioner has not shown practical difficulty requiring _____.

(a) The circumstances and features of the property including _____ are not unique because they exist generally throughout the City.

(b) The circumstances and features of the property relating to the variance request are self-created because _____.

(c) The failure to grant relief will result in mere inconvenience or inability to attain higher economic or financial return based on Petitioners statements that _____.

(d) The variance would result in interference with the adjacent and surrounding properties by _____.

(e) Granting the variance would be inconsistent with the spirit and intent of the ordinance to _____.

Should you have any further questions with regards to the matter please feel free to contact me at (248) 347-0417.

Alan Hall – Deputy Director Community Development - City of Novi



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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY

RECEIVED

ULI 22 2025

CITY OF NOVI
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I. PROPERTY INFORMATION (Address of subject ZBA Case)				Application Fee: <u>\$220.00</u>	
PROJECT NAME / SUBDIVISION Garage rebuild with addition				Meeting Date: <u>12/9/25</u>	
ADDRESS 623 S Lake Dr		LOT/SUITE/SPACE # 123		ZBA Case #: <u>PZ 25-0063</u>	
SIDEWELL # 50-22-2203 - 455 - UU1		May be obtain from Assessing Department			
CROSS ROADS OF PROPERTY S Lake Dr and Bernstadt					
IS THE PROPERTY WITHIN A HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION JURISDICTION? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				REQUEST IS FOR: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RESIDENTIAL <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> VACANT PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> SIGNAGE	
DOES YOUR APPEAL RESULT FROM A NOTICE OF VIOLATION OR CITATION ISSUED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO					
II. APPLICANT INFORMATION					
A. APPLICANT		EMAIL ADDRESS		CELL PHONE NO.	
NAME Zach Gielow				TELEPHONE NO.	
ORGANIZATION/COMPANY				FAX NO.	
ADDRESS 623 S Lake Dr		CITY Novi		STATE MI	ZIP CODE 48377
B. PROPERTY OWNER <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK HERE IF APPLICANT IS ALSO THE PROPERTY OWNER					
Identify the person or organization that owns the subject property:		EMAIL ADDRESS		CELL PHONE NO.	
NAME				TELEPHONE NO.	
ORGANIZATION/COMPANY				FAX NO.	
ADDRESS		CITY		STATE	ZIP CODE
III. ZONING INFORMATION					
A. ZONING DISTRICT					
<input type="checkbox"/> R-A <input type="checkbox"/> R-1 <input type="checkbox"/> R-2 <input type="checkbox"/> R-3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R-4 <input type="checkbox"/> RM-1 <input type="checkbox"/> RM-2 <input type="checkbox"/> MH <input type="checkbox"/> I-1 <input type="checkbox"/> I-2 <input type="checkbox"/> RC <input type="checkbox"/> TC <input type="checkbox"/> TC-1 <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____					
B. VARIANCE REQUESTED					
INDICATE ORDINANCE SECTION (S) AND VARIANCE REQUESTED:					
1. Section <u>3.1.5</u>		Variance requested <u>4' rear yard setback (35' required, variance of 31')</u>			
2. Section <u>3.1.5</u>		Variance requested <u>0.5 side yard setback (10' min required, variance of 9.5)</u>			
3. Section <u>3.1.5</u>		Variance requested <u>15' aggregate total (40' required, variance of 25')</u>			
4. Section <u>3.1.5</u>		Variance requested <u>lot coverage of 38% (25% allowed, variance of 13%)</u>			
IV. FEES AND DRAWINGS					
A. FEES					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single Family Residential (Existing) \$220 <input type="checkbox"/> (With Violation) \$275 <input type="checkbox"/> Single Family Residential (New) \$275					
<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple/Commercial/Industrial \$330 <input type="checkbox"/> (With Violation) \$440 <input type="checkbox"/> Signs \$330 <input type="checkbox"/> (With Violation) \$440					
<input type="checkbox"/> House Moves \$330 <input type="checkbox"/> Special Meetings (At discretion of Board) \$660					
B. DRAWINGS 1-COPY & 1 DIGITAL COPY SUBMITTED AS A PDF					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dimensioned Drawings and Plans• Site/Plot Plan• Existing or proposed buildings or addition on the property• Number & location of all on-site parking, if applicable• Existing & proposed distance to adjacent property lines• Location of existing & proposed signs, if applicable• Floor plans & elevations• Any other information relevant to the Variance application					



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

V. VARIANCE

A. VARIANCE (S) REQUESTED

☒ DIMENSIONAL ☐ USE ☐ SIGN

There is a five-(5) hold period before work/action can be taken on variance approvals.

B. SIGN CASES (ONLY)

Your signature on this application indicates that you agree to install a **Mock-Up Sign** ten-(10) days before the schedule ZBA meeting. Failure to install a mock-up sign may result in your case not being heard by the Board, postponed to the next schedule ZBA meeting, or cancelled. A mock-up sign is **NOT** to be actual sign. Upon approval, the mock-up sign must be removed within five-(5) days of the meeting. If the case is denied, the applicant is responsible for all costs involved in the removal of the mock-up or actual sign (if erected under violation) within five-(5) days of the meeting.

C. ORDINANCE

City of Novi Ordinance, Section 3107 – Miscellaneous

No order of the Board permitting the erection of a building shall be valid for a period longer than one-(1) year, unless a building permit for such erection or alteration is obtained within such period and such erection or alteration is started and proceeds to completion in accordance with the terms of such permit.

No order of the Board permitting a use of a building or premises shall be valid for a period longer than one-hundred and eighty-(180) days unless such use is establish within such a period; provided, however, where such use permitted is dependent upon the erection or alteration or a building such order shall continue in force and effect if a building permit for such erection or alteration is obtained within one-(1) year and such erection or alteration is started and proceeds to completion in accordance with the terms of such permit.

D. APPEAL THE DETERMINATION OF THE BUILDING OFFICIAL

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

The undersigned hereby appeals the determination of the Building Official / Inspector or Ordinance made

☐ CONSTRUCT NEW HOME/BUILDING ☐ ADDITION TO EXISTING HOME/BUILDING ☐ SIGNAGE
☐ ACCESSORY BUILDING ☐ USE ☒ OTHER Rebuild garage with vertical addition

VI. APPLICANT & PROPERTY SIGNATURES

A. APPLICANT

Zach Gielow
Applicant Signature

10/2/25

Date

B. PROPERTY OWNER

If the applicant is not the owner, the property owner must read and sign below:

The undersigned affirms and acknowledges that he, she or they are the owner(s) of the property described in this application, and is/are aware of the contents of this application and related enclosures.

Property Owner Signature

Date

VII. FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

DECISION ON APPEAL:

☐ GRANTED

☐ DENIED

The Building Inspector is hereby directed to issue a permit to the Applicant upon the following and conditions:

Chairperson, Zoning Board of Appeals

Date



Community Development Department

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REVIEW STANDARDS DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) will review the application package and determine if the proposed Dimensional Variance meets the required standards for approval. In the space below, and on additional paper if necessary, explain how the proposed project meets each of the following standards. (Increased costs associated with complying with the Zoning Ordinance will not be considered a basis for granting a Dimensional Variance.)

Standard #1. Circumstances or Physical Conditions.

Explain the circumstances or physical conditions that apply to the property that do not apply generally to other properties in the same zoning district or in the general vicinity. Circumstances or physical conditions may include:

- a. Shape of Lot.** Exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific property in existence on the effective date of the Zoning Ordinance or amendment.

☐ Not Applicable ☒ Applicable If applicable, describe below:

The shape of the lot is very narrow and shallow, which does not allow for the same size structure compared to other properties of similar value in the same zoning district. Actual lot dimensions are 38.3' wide (east and west along S Lake Dr) by 113.3' deep (north and south along Bernstadt).

and/or

- b. Environmental Conditions.** Exceptional topographic or environmental conditions or other extraordinary situations on the land, building or structure.

☐ Not Applicable ☒ Applicable If applicable, describe below:

The home is located close to a lake with a high water table level, which is why many homes on the street do not have basements. The lack of additional basement space is one of the reasons for the proposed addition to provide additional space for a family.

and/or

- c. Abutting Property.** The use or development of the property immediately adjacent to the subject property would prohibit the literal enforcement of the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance or would involve significant practical difficulties.

☒ Not Applicable ☐ Applicable If applicable, describe below:

Standard #2. Not Self-Created.

Describe the immediate practical difficulty causing the need for the Dimensional Variance, that the need for the requested variance is not the result of actions of the property owner or previous property owners (i.e., is not self-created).

The requested variance is not the result of any action taken by the current or previous homeowner, but is a result of the narrow-shaped parcel and is not a self-created issue.

Standard #3. Strict Compliance.

Explain how the Dimensional Variance in strict compliance with regulations governing area, setback, frontage, height, bulk, density or other dimensional requirements will unreasonably prevent the property owner from using the property for a permitted purpose, or will render conformity with those regulations unnecessarily burdensome.

The property is very narrow (only 38.3' wide) which makes it difficult to build a sizable living space without requiring dimensional variances. The homeowner would like to remove the current detached garage and rebuild with an addition above, which would actually be further away from the property line than the current detached garage. The addition would also match the existing structure and would be in uniformity with neighboring properties.

Standard #4. Minimum Variance Necessary.

Explain how the Dimensional Variance requested is the minimum variance necessary to do substantial justice to the applicant as well as to other property owners in the district.

The variance requested allows for the same footprint as the existing garage, but actually moves the footprint closer to the house instead of on multiple property lines. So, in effect the variance requested is actually less of a variance than the current structure and would be considered the minimum variance required to maintain that same square footage.

Standard #5. Adverse Impact on Surrounding Area.

Explain how the Dimensional Variance will not cause an adverse impact on surrounding property, property values, or the use and enjoyment of property in the neighborhood or zoning district.

- (1) The current two car garage is dilapidated and in need of serious repair (as cited by the City code enforcement division). It is an eye sore to the neighborhood and the proposed variance would allow for a new structure to be built matching the modern style of the current house.
- (2) The proposed variance regarding the setback from property lines would actually be less of a variance than where the current garage stands. This re-build would move the garage and addition further away from neighboring properties.
- (3) A vertical addition would still be at a height lower than other properties on S Lake Dr.

SKETCH OF SURVEY

Prepared For: ZACH GIELOW

Legal Description: PARCEL ID: 22-03-455-001

Lot 123 of IDLEMERE PARK, a subdivision of part of the
SW 1/4 and SE 1/4 of Section 3, T. 1 N., R. 8 E., Novi
Township (NOW CITY OF NOVI), Oakland County, Michigan
as recorded in Oakland County Records.

ZONING:

PROPERTY IS ZONED: R-4
(ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL)

SETBACKS:

FRONT: = 30 feet
SIDES: = 10 feet MIN./25 feet TOTAL
REAR: = 35 feet

MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE = 25%

LOT COVERAGE	
HOUSE	1047
GARAGE	512
TOTAL	1559
ENTIRE LOT	4,389
1559/4389	=0.355
TOTAL LOT COVERAGE = 35.5%	

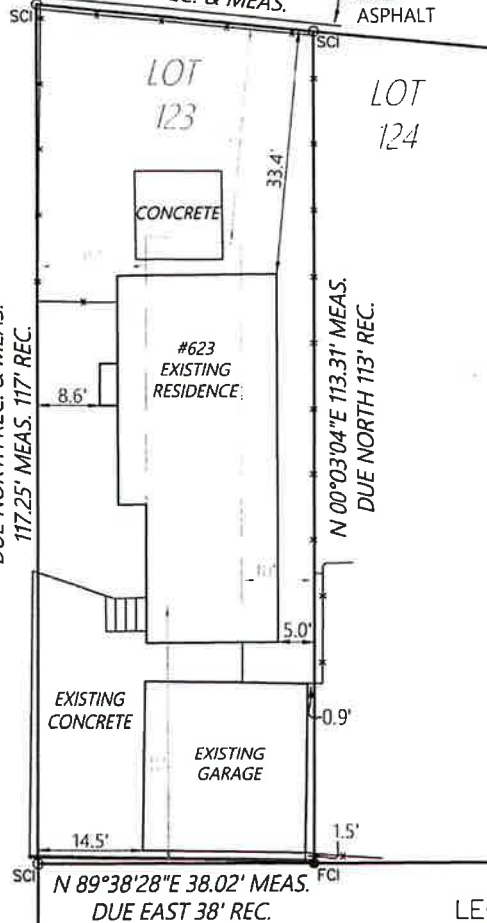
BERNSTRADT DRIVE
(PLATTED AS BEECHWOOD DRIVE 30' WIDE)

DUE NORTH REC. & MEAS.
117.25' MEAS. 117' REC.

SOUTH LAKE DRIVE
(PLATTED AS LAKESIDE DRIVE 35' WIDE)

N 84°27'19"W MEAS.
N 83°53'00"W REC.
38.30' REC. & MEAS.

EDGE OF
ASPHALT



LEGEND

- O - IRON SET
- - IRON FOUND
- MEAS. - MEASURED
- REC. - RECORDED
- FCI - FOUND CAPPED IRON
- FIR - FOUND IRON ROD
- SCI - SET CAPPED IRON
- *— - EXISTING FENCE LINE

NOTES:

NO TITLEWORK WAS SUPPLIED
BY CLIENT, THEREFORE ALL
EASEMENTS OF RECORD
MAY NOT BE SHOWN.

BEARING BASIS:

HELD BEARING BASIS
AS PER PLAT OF RECORD.

I hereby certify only to the parties hereon, that we have surveyed, at the direction of said parties, the above described lot, and that we have found or set as noted hereon, permanent markers at the exterior corners of said lot and that all visible encroachments of a permanent nature upon said lot, are as shown on this survey. Said lot subject to all easements and restrictions of record.



KAROL L. GROVE
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL SURVEYOR

ALPINE
Land Surveying, Inc.

376 BEECH FARM CIRCLE SUITE # 1293
HIGHLAND, MICHIGAN, 48357
PHONE: 810-207-8050

FIELD: KG DATE: 11-18-2024
DRAWN: DJS JOB NO: 24-6813
CHECKED: KG SHEET: 1 OF 1
REVISED:

SKETCH OF SURVEY

Prepared For: ZACH GIELOW

Legal Description: PARCEL ID: 22-03-455-001

Lot 123 of IDLEMERE PARK, a subdivision of part of the
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Township (NOW CITY OF NOVI), Oakland County, Michigan
as recorded in Oakland County Records.

ZONING:

PROPERTY IS ZONED: R-4
(ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL)

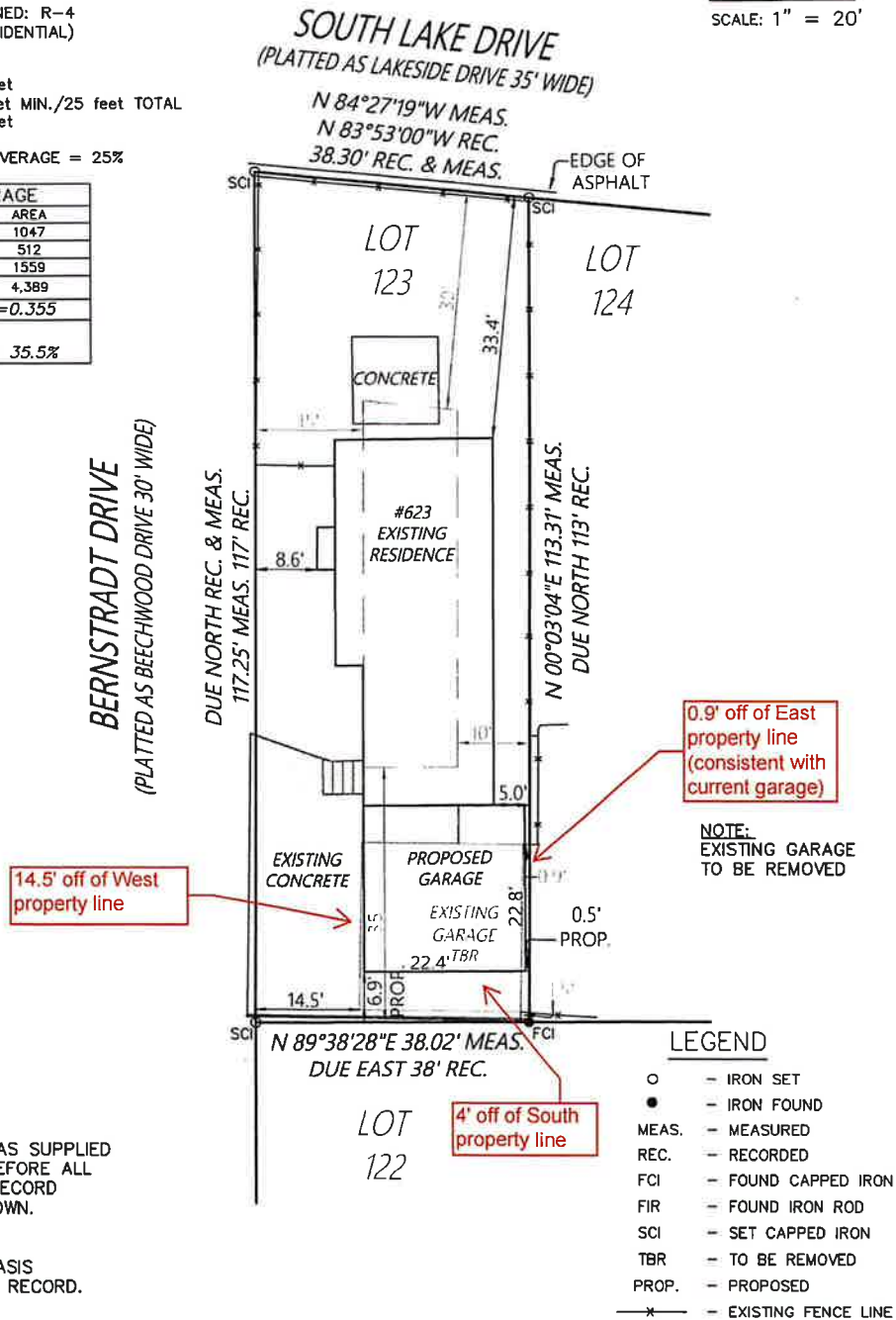
SETBACKS:

FRONT: = 30 feet
SIDES: = 10 feet MIN./25 feet TOTAL
REAR: = 35 feet

MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE = 25%

LOT COVERAGE	
HOUSE	1047
GARAGE	512
TOTAL	1559
ENTIRE LOT	4,389
1559/4389	=0.355
TOTAL LOT COVERAGE = 35.5%	

0 10 20
SCALE: 1" = 20'

NOTES:

NO TITLEWORK WAS SUPPLIED
BY CLIENT, THEREFORE ALL
EASEMENTS OF RECORD
MAY NOT BE SHOWN.

BEARING BASIS:

HELD BEARING BASIS
AS PER PLAT OF RECORD.

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376 BEECH FARM CIRCLE SUITE # 1293
HIGHLAND, MICHIGAN, 48357
PHONE: 810-207-8050

FIELD: KG DATE: 11-18-2024
DRAWN: DJS JOB NO: 24-6813
CHECKED: KG SHEET: 1 OF 1
REVISED: 11-20-24 REVISED TO ADD PROPOSED GARAGE

garage



Current picture showing neighboring lots
and detached garage in the back



Potential rendering of an attached garage with an addition above

