

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GEORGETOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS HELD MAY 28, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Healy at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Tom Healy (Chairman Healy), Susan Ouellette, Kyle Terpstra, Kelly Kuiper, Trevor Petroelje (alternate)  
Members Absent: Kendall Grable  
Others Present: Ryan Schab – Zoning Administrator (ZA)

**#250528-01 – Approval of the Agenda of the [May 28, 2025](#) Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting.**

Moved by Kelly Kuiper, seconded by Susan Ouellette to approve the [May 28, 2025](#) agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#250528-02 – Approval of the Minutes of the [February 26, 2025](#) Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting.**

Moved by Kelly Kuiper, seconded by Kyle Terpstra to approve the [February 26, 2025](#) minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**#250528-03 – Public Hearing – (VAR2501) River City Steamboat Company LLC, Greg Boynton, 825 Taylor St., is requesting to have a setback of 25 feet, a variance of 50 feet from the 75 feet required in Sec. 20.4(F)(5) and Chapter 24; in a (RR) Rural Residential district, on a parcel of land described as P.P. # 70-14-02-200-013, located at 825 Taylor St., Georgetown Township, Ottawa County, Michigan. ([Application](#), [Site Plan](#), [Fee Paid](#))**

The ZA presented the [Staff Report](#). The ZA also provided additional context not included in the staff report after questions were raised concerning where the property line is located on the Grand River's edge. After doing research and speaking with Ottawa County's GIS department, the legal description of this parcel describes the property line as the water's edge, which can change. The language "more or less" is used in the legal description. The estimated property line as shown on GIS is an accurate reflection of this legal description. The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) should also be aware that owners adjacent to waterways are given certain riparian rights. The site plan provided by Greg Boynton, the Applicant, describes the approximate river's edge and shows he plans to construct the addition to the campground, 25' away from the approximate river's edge. For purposes of this variance request, the approximate river's edge as shown on the site plan or GIS mapping can be considered the property line.

Chairman Healy stated that the property line will be changing then, depending on where the water is located. The distance the site is from the property line could be 35' one month and 15' the next month.

The ZA stated that the ZBA could grant the variance from the approximate water's edge to avoid confusion with the changing property line. The GIS map has an estimated property line based on the legal description and the Applicant has submitted a site plan that shows an approximate river's

edge. These can be used to determine where the site will be built even if the distance to the water's edge (property line) may change month to month.

Chairman Healy asked how the GIS department determined where that approximate water's edge is located.

The ZA stated that he was informed that the lines as shown on the GIS map are the best the county can do with what the legal description offers, bearing in mind that the legal description literally calls out the water's edge as the official property line. Understanding that this line can change, the GIS map is the best the county can do with that information. The ZA suggested using the county's estimated property line to define where the variance is being measured.

Chairman Healy asked if the Applicant had any information to present.

The Applicant gave their presentation to the ZBA.

Trevor Petroelje stated that setbacks are usually necessitated due to abutting properties and noted that this site is abutting a river. The site would be well over 75' from the parcel on the other side of the river.

Kelly Kuiper stated in regard to standard #5, the variance was already granted for the campground's other property and to deny this variance would be to deny a property right already given to the rest of the property. She asked the Applicant if his plan is located on upland or if there would be any other reason the plan couldn't be shifted away from the water's edge.

The Applicant stated that the plan is located on the only available upland on the newly acquired addition. The remaining area is all wetland.

Kelly Kuiper noted that the upland fact should have been better represented in the application. The issue is not just the proximity to the river, it is that the site can only be built there due to the surrounding wetlands which is an important factor when considering a variance. The limited nature of the upland is what is driving the design as opposed to where the river's edge may fall.

The Applicant confirmed they would not be able to build without this variance approval.

Chairman Healy opened the public hearing.

Chairman Healy closed the public hearing.

Chairman Healy stated that he supports the staff report's finding that standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 all have been met. He asked the rest of the ZBA if they agree with those findings.

The rest of the ZBA agreed with the staff report's findings that standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and , all have been met.

Chairman Healy stated that the issue is with standards 5 and 7.

Trevor Petroelje stated that standards 5 and 7 are both met in his opinion.

Susan Ouellette stated that standard 5 is met as there are no other properties in the vicinity besides the existing campground that has this property right. Standard 7 is met due to it being located in a floodplain, surrounded by wetlands, and located on the only available upland. This request is not necessitated as a result of the property owner's actions.

Kyle Terpstra stated that standard 5 is met due to the other campground parcel already being granted this right. Standard 7 is met due to the environmental factors.

Kelly Kuiper stated that standard 5 is met because the only comparison you can use is the existing campground. Since the rest of the campground has already been granted this property right and is the only apt comparison, standard 5 is met. For standard 7, she specified that the design is to keep the site located in the upland area on the parcel and that it is not necessitated by action of the owner.

Chairman Healy stated that he agrees with the rest of the ZBA in regard to standard 5 and 7. It is consistent with best practice in public policy to make best use of the land. Everything in this location is below the floodplain. The use is zoned RR, however there are not many uses that can be used in a floodplain, a campground being one of the few.

**Moved by Kelly Kuiper, seconded by Kyle Terpstra to accept the staff report as finding of fact and approve the following motion:**

**Motion: To approve (VAR2501) River City Steamboat Company LLC, Greg Boynton, 825 Taylor St., requesting to have a setback of 25 feet, a variance of 50 feet from the 75 feet required in Sec. 20.4(F)(5) and Chapter 24; in a (RR) Rural Residential district, on a parcel of land described as P.P. # 70-14-02-200-013, located at 825 Taylor St., Georgetown Township, Ottawa County, Michigan; based on the finding that the request meets the seven standards of the ordinance. Specifically, standards 1 through 7 have been met and the reasons are as stated in the staff report for standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6. Standard 5 has been met due to the property right being granted to the adjacent campground parcel already. Standard 7 has been met due to the site being located on the only available upland and the request is not necessitated as a result of action by the property owner.**

Yeas: Tom Healy (Chairman Healy), Susan Ouellette, Kyle Terpstra, Kelly Kuiper, Trevor Petroelje, (alternate)

Nays:

Absent:

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### **#250528-04 – Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **#250528-05 – Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

#### **#250528-06 – Discussion**

The ZA provided the ZBA with an update on VAR2406 in regard to the variance that was obtained by an Applicant in compliance with the Federal Fair Housing Act. The Applicant met the deadlines prescribed by the ZBA and brought the property into compliance. There have been zero complaints from the neighbors with regard to duck noise, only a grass complaint which upon investigation yielded no violations.

**#250528-07 – Adjournment**

Moved by Kelly Kuiper, seconded by Kyle Terpstra, to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.