

Dear Zoning Appeals Board,

4/12/2022

My name is Dan Siminski and I have a very pressing issue that needs your attention and support. It is in regards to the existing cul-de-sac on Baywood (Lowing Woods subdivision), which terminates at 2901 Bauer property (see attached maps). My parents in law (Nate and Cindy Boynton) own the 10.2 acres to the east of the cul-de-sac (2901 Bauer Road), which is a property that has only been owned by the Boynton family since it was first deeded by the government. As such, this land is very personal to this family

It's kind of a long story but my niece (Sophia Minervino) was in a horrible car accident August of 2019. One day she was set to graduate from GVSU to become a teacher, the next day she was facing a traumatic brain injury that will require her to get substantial assistance throughout the day for the rest of her life. You can read a little bit about her here:

<https://www.schoolnewsnetwork.org/2021/09/29/support-comes-from-anyone-and-everyone-in-their-own-way/>

The family is in desperate need of an ADA accessible house that is close to grandparents (Nate and Cindy) as well as other family (2 of Sophia's aunts live in Lowing Woods). A place they can call home while caring for their daughter while also receiving support from all of the family. Sophia currently is housed in the family living room with all the windows covered up for shade and only a small access to the kitchen. That's it. That is her world. The woods are ideal as Sophia has a lot of light sensitivity from the accident and the location east of the Cul-de-sac allows us all to help this family that is in great need. It will also give them a fair bit of needed privacy and eventually they will also need to install a therapy pool in the back yard. Connections to public utilities would be very important as well.

So, long story...shorter. They want to build a house on the 2901 property so all their needs can be met while also being really close to family for help. Building in the middle of the woods is not a great option due to ADA accessibility, utilities and other ADA needs. So, what I have been asking will take a fair amount of corporation from everyone as we are all trying to rally around this families and support their needs.

The crux of the problem is that 2901 Bauer is currently landlocked. There is an existing home (Nate and Cindy Boynton) on the 10.2 acre parcel that has access to Bauer Road via a 0.5-mile-long dirt driveway. This driveway crosses the Siminski property via an easement but technically does not have any road frontage. So, building on this property presents some challenges while also keeping ADA needs in mind. The dirt road will make access very difficult for an ADA van to make it through 12 months out of the year as it is not in the greatest of shape. It also crosses wetlands and a creek that floods the road on occasion.

So, we are asking to split this existing landlocked parcel into 2 landlocked parcels and to build an ADA accessible house on the east side of the Baywood cul-de-sac. This would give this family a forever home that will be able to serve all their needs while also having access to family support. This location would still give them a neighborhood feel and allow for safe pedestrian access for daily walks etc. While the parcel is technically landlocked, it is only so because Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC) controls a 66' wide, 10' deep strip of land between the cul-de-sac and the proposed property. OCRC has expressed a willingness to review possible driveway access on this cul-de-sac but refuse to consider this request unless Georgetown Township first approves a variance to split the parcel. So, a bit of the chicken and

the egg. Our hope is that this parcel can be approved to be split with the condition that OCRC grants driveway access at the cul-de-sac. Alternative two, would be to grand a variance to split the parcel but to utilize the existing easement that heads to Bauer. Far from ideal but would still give them “free” land to build on. The existing home function well with just an easement, so it wouldn’t be a huge stretch to allow 2 homes the same allowance. The 2901 Bauer property is zoned RR although it sits between a PUD and a LDR neighborhood. So, it is very feasible that this potential parcel would not be landlocked for long.

In speaking with the neighbors on Baywood, this variance application and potential build has the support of the residents on this street. Most of them was even willing to sign a petition stating such (see signed petition). As such, this variance would certainly not be detrimental to the neighbors.

In my previous discussions with OCRC and GT we have been told we would need to remove the existing cul-de-sac, extend the road, extend the sewer and extend the water main, then build a new (slightly larger) cul-de-sac on our property in order to get official approval to build here (without a variance). A suggestion that quite frankly is cost prohibiting for this single income family. We are trying to give them “free” land to build on in an effort to afford a house that suits their needs (as car insurance will only cover a portion of the build). In addition, there is a 25-30 feet deep ravine just slightly to the east of Baywood that prevents any road or land development without significant cost. There is also a family pole barn at the southeast corner of the existing cul-de-sac that we all would have to be navigated around. All things that I feel were not take into consideration when plans were made for Baywood to potentially extend across here (some day). The Lowing Woods PUD has extended another road only 450’ north of here (Lumen Mill Drive) that will easily serve as the east/west crossing road in the future should Baywood cul-de-sac become permanent. The location of Lumen Mill Drive is a FAR better location for a road crossing based on topography on the Tall Oaks Property.

So, we are at YOUR mercy to get a variance granted here for this VERY special medical circumstance/hardship. I’m pleading with you (begging really) to take this families tough situation into account. As you can see on the attached (crude) sketches, the Boynton’s already have a pole barn to the SE of the existing cul-de-sac, which would make installing a new larger cul-de-sac not really an option anyway. Additionally, with the history of this property, it would be extremely unlikely that they would ever approve a public road to cross it (not to mention the challenge of the ravine). So, this temporary cul-de-sac would very much be permanent the way it sits today (at least for a VERY long time). Approving this variance will not hurt anyone or make thing detrimental to immediate neighbors or any future neighborhoods that may be built. The existing cul-de-sac is 80’ in diameter, which already exceeds any permanent diameters that we install in the City of Grand Rapids by at least 10’ (I’m the lead designer for GR’s Engineering department). So, it should serve the community quite well as is should it be left as a permanent feature.

Looking forward to presenting this request in person.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Siminski".

Daniel Siminski, P.E.