

MINUTES
CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
5:30 PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, 2025
3RD FLOOR BOARD ROOM, CLAY COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Members Present: Travis Bouton, Leo Splonskowski, Dennis Loock, Joel Hildebrandt

Members Absent: Tim Brendemuhl

Others Present: Matt Jacobson, Brian Melton, Darren Brooke, Rita Rueckert, Kyle Schmidt, Michael Ward of Benchmark Builders

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chair Joel Hildebrandt.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

On motion by Leo Splonskowski, seconded by Dennis Loock, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the meeting Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 19TH, 2025:

On motion by Dennis Loock, seconded by Travis Bouton, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes from August 19th, 2025.

PUBLIC HEARING(S):

MICHAEL WARD DBA BENCHMARK BUILDERS – REQUEST FOR VARIANCE

The applicant is seeking approval of a variance to reduce the road right-of-way setback for an attached garage at 21639 162nd Ave, Barnesville, MN 56514 on Parcel ID: 16.070.0050 in Lot 005, Block 001, Pearl View Estates, Section 27, Township 137N, Range 45W, Humboldt Township.

On motion by Leo Splonskowski, seconded by Dennis Loock, and unanimously carried, the public hearing was opened.

Matt Jacobson, Planning & Zoning Director advised the request is for a road centerline setback of 66 feet, which is a 24-foot reduction from the minimum required 90-foot centerline setback. The property is a single-family dwelling with attached garage and also a detached garage located in Pearl View subdivision. All properties in that area are zoned Agricultural General (AG). The current garage will be converted to be part of the house and a new attached garage will be added. The septic field and well do not allow for any other placement.

The existing attached garage is 637 square feet (sq ft). The detached garage is 837 sq ft. All structures within the subdivision meet or exceed setbacks.

There previously was a denied Variance by a subdivision resident which asked to construct an attached garage 60 feet from the road centerline in 2020, with the reason cited as the Variance would alter essential character of the locality. Of note, Variances are not precedent setting and each request is unique to the property.

Policy Considerations reviewed from the 2045 Comprehensive and Transportation Plan include:

Transportation - System

1. Maintain and Operate an accessible, safe and efficient transportation system for the movement of people and goods throughout Clay County.

Applicant provided the practical difficulty as:

Power, sewer, and water make construction elsewhere on the property virtually impossible. A garage addition to the west encroaches on the side boundary setback and makes passage to an existing detached garage more difficult.

The County does provide snow removal and maintenance on this roadway and the County Engineer advised there would not be any issues since the speeds are low on this road and there wouldn't be a large amount of snow thrown by the plow due to the proximity of this property to a curve in the road.

Michael Ward represented the owners Kyle and Sara Schmidt, and he is with Benchmark Builders. He states the new garage will be encroaching into the required setback by approximately 24 feet. They had looked at extending the proposed garage to the west and they thought there may still be some room and still possibly get to the existing garage at the back of the lot but in measuring it out this would be right on the property line. Mr. Ward advised that the property is deceiving in that it appears there is a lot of room available but when measuring it they determined it would make access to the existing detached garage impossible.

Kyle Schmidt advised he has spoken with his neighbors and they do not have any issues with the proposed construction.

Matt Jacobson advised there were no comments received from the Township Board.

On motion by Leo Splonskowski, seconded by Travis Bouton, and unanimously carried, the public hearing was closed.

The Findings of Fact and Order were addressed by the Board of Adjustment as they pertain to the requested Variance.

Minimum staff recommended conditions:

- The addition can be no closer than 66 feet to the road centerline.

Leo Splonskowski pointed out that this residence is on a residential street right at a bend in the road and traffic would be somewhat slower in that stretch than other stretches of the same street.

On motion by Leo Splonskowski, seconded by Travis Bouton, and unanimously carried, the Board of Adjustment *GRANTED* the Variance request with the following condition:

- The addition can be no closer than 66 feet to the road centerline.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion by Leo Splonskowski, seconded by Dennis Loock, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.



Joel Hildebrandt, Chair
Clay County Board of Adjustment