

Dickinson County Board of Adjustment
September 26, 2020
7:00 P.M.

The Dickinson County Board of Adjustment met Monday September 28, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. in the community room of the Dickinson County Courthouse and via zoom.

Members present were Jeff Ashland, Alex Oponski, Jen Johnson, Delmer Lee, and Kirby Berhow.

Also in attendance was David Kohlhaase- Dickinson County Zoning Administrator and Megan Kardell-Dickinson County Zoning Assistant

Jeff Ashland, chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

First on the agenda was Roll Call.

Second on the agenda was New Business. Karen L. Floss Trust, Lots 4 & 6 AND ADJ 10' VAC ALLEY, Block Q, Methodist Camp, Dickinson County, Iowa. The request was read.

Craig Floss introduced himself and Karen Floss to the board. They are the owners of the property. They purchased their cabin in 1995, which is on lot 6. They've had it for 25 years, they have a long history with Monarch Cove/Methodist Camp area. Karen's great great grandparents built a home there, and including their adult boys whom are all in their twenties, there have been 6 generations coming to the area. In 2016 they had the opportunity to buy the cabin next to them, which is Lot 4 including the vacated ally. Their original intent was to simply try to build on to their existing cabin. They have many nice oak trees on the property. They did not want to disturb any of the trees, their goal was to add on to the east, but unfortunately, the main part of the cabin which is 100 years old, does not have much of a foundation. As many of you know many of the cabins in Monarch Cove were meant to be seasonal residences, no one ever dreamed they would last 100 years. The foundation under their cabin is maybe 6" inches below the topsoil line. The addition that was put on in 1987 was a wood foundation and he does not believe it was properly constructed because they have had some major deterioration issues.

During their investigation, they determined there was not anything they could do to save the structure. So they put into motion building a new home. The new home they are designing hopefully fits into the neighborhood. Their goal was to make something that had a cottage feel, they did not want to overpower the lots that they have, and wanted everything to "fit in". Monarch Cove is a wonderful collection of homes and cabins, they are all tight in there and everyone gets along quite well, but they also want to be respectful of the architecture of the area. The new home hopefully will provide us the ability to retire here, they've been here for 25 years, but the plan is once retirement happens for them, they will hopefully be here fulltime. The variance specifically requested is a pie shaped piece from the middle of the lot in the rear near the vacated ally. The pie shaped variance is where a portion of the house encroaches, and the other area is a covered porch over the patio. So what have they done? First of all, their goal was to put everything into the setbacks so they did not have to be here asking for a variance. As they started doing different designs, they realized first they would have to remove two trees, a maple and an ash tree. They did not see any other way to make it work other than to remove those trees. The good thing is, they do not have to disturb any of the Burr Oaks. They tried to move the structure forward, then they run into the two trees in the front yard near the 25' foot setback line. Another thing is if they move it forward, they would have a difficulty taking natural advantage of the slope of the lot. One of the things they were interested in was to keep the footprint as small as possible and get as much usable square feet as they can for their family. They wanted to utilize the lower level and have at least daylight level windows in that rear area so we could have bedrooms on that level. As they moved the structure forward, it takes a lot more dirt out of the lot, it crunches it towards the street, which then inhibits the driveway and it becomes too steep. The variance for the covered patio is if anyone lives under Burr Oak trees, you know that they are messy year round, they wanted the patio to enjoy the outdoors, a big part of being at the lake, and of course the covered patio would help with projectiles from coming down from the trees. So two variance areas, the pie shaped variance on Lot 4 and the covered porch on Lot 6. As one looks/goes down the street, once can see how close everything is and many things are right on top of the street. This structure is being proposed at the 35' feet setback mark, which is the ideal. Setting it back is visually much more pleasing with the house next door to us. Their goal was to

line the structure up with the surrounding houses and not crowd the street. The cabins right across from them are practically right on top of the street so rather than make it look that way, they thought this was a good way to do it. As you look visually around the area they are off the lot line and adhering to all of the setbacks except what they've covered. In Monarch Cove the parking is also tight, so the ability to have the extra 10 feet in their driveway will also help, as there is no parking on the street. That is another advantage to placing the structure as proposed.

Ashland asked Kohlhaase about the vacated alley.

Kohlhaase said we do not know the history about how it came about, but as you can see part of it was vacated and part of it was not. It was probably an attempt years ago by whomever the property owner was at the time to work with Methodist Camp to get that part of the alley vacated. We discussed that with the Flosses and they did not know either.

Floss said that the previous owners purchased the property in 1993 and it was that way when they bought it.

Ashland asked if the area would always stay vacated.

Kohlhaase said yes, unless the property owner would give it back, and that would require a process and procedure.

Ashland and Lee said they like how it is laid out.

Floss said it is certainly tricky with all the trees.

Correspondence was read.

Ashland opened the meeting to the public.

Grant Goodenow, 15356 Harmon Ln. said his parents and grandparents owned the cabin before the Flosses so they are very familiar with them and went there as children. We were really happy with the proposal, the Flosses were very open with what they wanted to do and getting our opinions along the way. They really like that they are going to save the trees, because that is what everyone else tries to do as well. We need their trees, and it actually gives us more room on that side of their lot.

Paul Hanson, 21350 N Park Dr., for several years he used to live right across the street from them. He has since moved down a couple of streets, but he supports their proposal and they will do a good job.

Guy Goodenow, representing his mother Jean Goodenow, he read her statement. She is delighted that Craig and Karen Floss have decided to build a new residence in Monarch Cove. The Flosses are people who show respect for their neighbor's, care well for their property, and value the traditions of this community that was established over a century ago. Their young adult sons represent the 5th generation of a family that has been an integral part of the community since its early days. He has to amend her statement to the 6th generation after hearing the Flosses tonight.

Ashland closed the public meeting.

Berhow motioned to vote. Oponski seconded the motion. All were in favor

5-0 approval. Johnson, Ashland, Lee, Berhow, Oponski.

Third on the agenda was Old Business. There was none.

Fourth on the agenda was approval of the minutes from August 24, 2020. Lee motioned to approve. Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Fifth on the agenda was Communications. There was none. Kohlhaase gave the board a quick update regarding variances in the past couple months.

Seventh on the agenda was Adjournment. Oponski motioned to adjourn. Berhow seconded the motion. All were in favor.

(For more information see recording BOA 09 26 2020)