

Lebanon Valley Protective Association

Request for Variance to increase 4000 sq. ft Bulk Area requirement to 6480 Sq. ft.

Facts

The LVPA property is in RA1 where Bulk area per building is limited to 4000 sq.ft. Applicant proposes to construct a building meeting “Essential Building” standard of 6480 sq.ft. on its property on US Rt. 20 corner of Mill Road.

Applicant’s Case

The LVPA has long planned to consolidate its two Fire stations at either end of the Town proper into a central location and years ago purchased the subject property for this purpose. The current buildings are too small to house fire trucks and assorted equipment efficiently. New Emergency Service structures are required to be built to NYS IBC to “essential standards” for benefit of the community at large for times of disaster, weather or otherwise, to provide safe cover for residents displaced in such events. The applicant asserts that the proposed structure is the smallest they can build to accommodate the code requirements and to house all their necessary equipment in one dedicated structure. To be compliant with Zoning Regulation Bulk Area requirement, applicant would have to build a 4000 sq. ft. structure with an accessory structure of 2480 sq.ft. which would defeat the purpose of consolidation, and affect response time in emergencies. Therefore the variance is requested.

No specific objections were raised, but community members questioned the siting of the structure, its compatibility with the neighborhood, its architectural quality, flood plain location and cost to the Town. Questions about the existing building were raised as to the added impact of an additional 2000 sq. ft. building on the lot.

The Board discussed all of these questions after which an AFFIRMATIVE decision was reached after examining the 5 factors.

Compatibility

Board members questioned the architectural style of the structure and whether it would be significantly disruptive to the neighborhood and concludes that it meets minimum standards. The Board recognizes that the Planning Board will make the final determination of compatibility through Site Plan Review.

Alternative

The Board finds that the alternative of seeking a different location would be an unreasonable burden on the applicant, that building two separate structures would be a burden and would counter the intent to consolidate its operations to be more effective in times of emergency. The Board finds there is no reasonable alternative.

Substantiality

The Board acknowledges that more than doubling the proposed structure is more than half the permitted bulk area for the zone and that the request is substantial., However the board finds the mitigating factors, reasoning as follows: The bulk area limitation in the RA1 zone is 4000 sq. ft. per principal structure or 10% of lot coverage (1 acre is 42,000 sq.ft.). This site is eight acres, so the percentage of coverage for the proposed structure on this lot is less than 2%. Even when adding in the existing building, of 2000 sq.ft. the coverage is still 2% of the total lot. The Board finds that when considering the scope of the entire property and project the result is not substantial.

Environmental

No evidence was presented showing any environmental issues

Self Created Hardship

The applicant acknowledges that it was aware at the time of purchase of the bulk area requirements.

The vote to Approve the Variance Request of an increase to the Bulk Area of 2480 sq.ft. was as follows:

Jeannine Tonetti.	Aye
Phyllis Stoller	Aye
Charles Gerald	Aye
Ted Salem	Aye
Anthony Murad	Aye

Anthony Murad

ZBA Chairman