

White Lake Minor Variance Request
for
Lorna Bradley and Anne Fleming
134 Cedar Cove Road, White Lake, Ont. K0A3L0
June 20, 2013

Executive Summary

Two long time vacation users wish to make their cottage at White Lake their permanent principal residence.

To accomplish this they are planning to expand their existing cottage to accommodate year round living.

The proposed design requires a minor variance to setback distances on the west side of the lot. The interior side setback required is 7.0 metres, and the proposed extension has a setback of 3.0 metres.

The design is constrained by a number of site considerations, and in the opinion of the applicants, the proposal is a sensitive solution to the site issues, with limited impact on the neighbouring properties.

The applicants have met with the neighbours to understand their issues, and in the applicant's opinion, there appear to be insufficient substantive issues for their concerns.

The applicants believe their design is appropriate and ask that the Council exercise their discretion to approve the requested minor variance.

Additional details and context follow.

History

A little bit of history to provide some context.

We have been coming to White Lake for 23 years. Initially, we had a Park Model Trailer at Cedar Cove.

A serious health situation limits our ability to travel outside the country due to inability to obtain travel health insurance at a reasonable cost.

We decided to buy a Cottage as our principal holiday option, and purchased our present home in 2008.

Since then, we have used our Cottage extensively throughout the year.

- We use it most weekends year round.
- We use it for winter holidays
- Lorna (Bradley) was a teacher and lives at the Cottage virtually all summer.

Slowly, we came to the decision to retire to White Lake, and began to relocate most of our services to the White Lake area. Our Family Doctor is in Almonte. Our Dentist is in Arnprior. In addition, we patronize businesses in Arnprior, Pakenham for our Furniture needs, and our last vehicle was purchased in Arnprior.

We are of course concerned over medical issues, but one event was adequately handled, and the support we have obtained from friends, neighbours, and the availability of medical services in reasonably close proximity, have given us the confidence to complete the move.

We have made a commitment to White lake.

- We are involved in the Community.
- Our circle of friends is centered in White Lake.
- And as mentioned above, we are slowly relocating all of our goods and services suppliers to the White Lake area.

Now, both Lorna (Bradley) and Anne (Fleming) are retired. Lorna is working as a substitute teacher and has been fortunate to have been retained by the Arnprior School Board, as well as the Ottawa Carleton Board.

We have decided to finalize our move

- Sold our Ottawa Residence in April 2013, and so now are 100% Full Time at White Lake.
- Our existing cottage / home (approximately 806 sq. ft.) is too small for comfortable year round occupancy. As an example, the two bedrooms are 13' by 9.11' and 13' by 9.2', with very small closets.

That brings us to the current situation.

Process & Timeline

We began design with knowledgeable local contacts in Jan. 2013. This was coincident with the listing of our Ottawa residence.

We had Preliminary drawings completed in Feb. 2013, and we took these for discussion with County/Township Planning Department staff.

At this stage we attempted to contact our "immediate" neighbours, but as both neighbours are primarily summer users, we were unable to make contact.

- One neighbour we understand was away, and in any event, we were not confident we had the correct principal residence contact information.
- The other neighbour did not respond to Email or telephone calls.

We were finally able to contact our neighbours the middle of April 2013.

During this time we continued regular contact with your Planning Department.

We were advised that we could proceed with excavation in advance of applying for a Building Permit. We began site clearing and excavation for the footings on Monday, April 22, 2013.

It was at this point that our neighbours to the west expressed concern about the location.

Following discussions with Planning staff, we realized that a variance would be required. Our Project Manager acknowledges his oversight in not recognizing the variance requirement.

At this stage we have completed the excavation. We have applied for a building permit, but NO construction has commenced pending the outcome of this variance request.

Design & Siting Considerations

Our Objective is to construct an attached garage suitable for two Cars, a Boat, and a Snowmobile plus some storage and workspace because there is no basement to accommodate this need.

In addition, we would like an expanded living space suitable for year round living. Above the garage we will have a new Master Bedroom, Master Bath, an exercise room, an office, and a small sitting room.

We would like to highlight that this will be our principal and only residence, and so we feel we need storage space which might not otherwise be required if we had an additional residence.

The dimensions of the extension are 36 ft. by 40 ft.

Siting Considerations

We understand that because of the requirements for setback from the lake, we are unable to build in front, nor do we want to build at the front.

We have been advised that the age and construction quality of the "existing" cottage are such that building a second floor above the existing building would be prohibitively expensive.

As well, and perhaps as important, we would point out that a second floor above the existing building could lead to privacy issues with the west neighbours as we would be looking directly into their yard.

Therefore our decision was NOT to put a second storey on the existing building. We chose to build behind the existing building

We have been told that we are unable to site the extension any closer to our septic tanks and our septic field.

Finally, the siting recognizes the turning radius to access the garage.

Design

Our proposed extension is set behind (to the north of) the cottages of our neighbours. Looking east and west from our extension, the land on both sides is vacant. We have indicated above why we felt we needed to put the extension in that location. One of the unintended consequences of that siting is it minimizes visual intrusion into both neighbours buildings. We think this is a positive aspect of our proposal.

We have also recessed the garage, so as to minimize the height of the extension.

Drainage

We understand that drainage has been raised as a potential issue by our neighbour to the east.

We have discussed this matter with them in the past, and were told that the drainage issue goes back to before we owned the cottage when the previous owner was installing the septic system in 1998. We understand that our neighbour chose not to raise this matter with the previous owner.

Our Designer/Contractor tells us that our present plans have no impact on the topography or drainage issue, and in fact may "actually" improve the drainage on the site. (Tony Ferguson will speak to these facts)

Nevertheless, we offered to review the drainage if the neighbour would share in the cost of any remedial work. They declined.

We would reiterate that any "existing" drainage issues pre-date our ownership of the property, and are not adversely impacted by our planned building addition.

It should also be noted that the variance requested is on the west side of the property and would have little or no impact on our neighbour to the east.

Summary

We hope that you will find that we have tried to make best use of the site to minimize the impact of our proposed extension and still keep our costs reasonable.

We do not believe that the variance will have a significant impact on the neighbours or the community because:

1. Our siting of the extension behind the neighbours buildings will minimize massing and will minimize privacy issues.
2. We have recessed the garage to minimize the height.
3. We have done our best to consult with the neighbours, and we understand they have no substantive issues which exist because of the extension.

As an aside, we would also add that our living at White Lake full time should be seen as a "safety" benefit to our neighbours who generally do not come up in the winter. Our residency should reduce the chance of break-ins at our neighbours' properties?

We hope that you will exercise your discretion to approve this minor variance.

We look forward to answering any questions you may have, and we thank you very much for your hearing our request.

Lorna Bradley and Anne Fleming