

Detailed description of request for Variance

We are requesting a variance for the forward placement of a detached garage, due to the unique circumstances related to our lot and the Northfork development. During the initial grading of the Northfork development, our lot was graded as such to allow for a walk-out basement, resulting in at least an eight (8) foot vertical drop-off that spans the width of the property approximately 120 feet from the street. As a result of the grading of our lot, the detached garage cannot be positioned so that it is in line with the principal structure without having to introduce non-typical construction methods and extraordinary amount of costs that would include but not limited to the following:

- 1) Foundation wall heights exceeding 8' at the rear of the garage due to the contours of the lot.
- 2) Soil compaction engineering and testing due to the depth of the garage footings at the rear of the garage.
- 3) Potential need to oversize the footings at the rear of the garage due to unbalanced fill at the rear of the garage.
- 4) Additional expense to side the rear of the garage over the additional 4' of exposed foundation at the rear of the garage.
- 5) Additional expense to re-build, and build new, retaining walls.
- 6) Potential impact on primary and secondary septic locations to maintain 4:1 slope at rear of garage.

In addition to the construction hardships listed above, we feel the following circumstances should be taken into consideration and we believe would further support our variance request:

- 7) The Northfork Actuarial Review Committee has reviewed this site plan and garage design and has approved it.
- 8) We have three (3) neighbors within the Northfork development with property sizes below 2 acres and have detached garages that are closer to the front property line than the principal structure. Property addresses are:
 - a. 15900 Saint Andrews Ln.
 - b. 15901 Saint Andrews Ln.
 - c. 16100 Andrie St.
- 9) We have selected a location that is as far back from the street as possible (approx. 90 ft setback) without having to incur the additional expenses called out in numbers (1) – (5) above. The desired location only has a very minimal forward placement relative to the principal structure and would look very similar to the detached garages at the following Northfork property addresses (all under 2 acres). The 90 ft setback would be greater than or equal to all of these properties:
 - a. 15971 Saint Andrews Ln.
 - b. 9040 159th Ln.
 - c. 9321 Inverness Ln.
 - d. 9400 Inverness Ln.
 - e. 9411 Inverness Ln.

- 10) The proposed detached garage was specifically designed with stone-work and LP smartside lap siding to match the exterior finish look of the existing home on both street facing sides, which complies with the Northfork Development covenants and City of Ramsey requirements. It will also be built with soffit, fascia and eave overhang. The overall aesthetics of the garage will look more natural with the overhead doors not facing the street. Essentially looking at a full 4 car façade facing the street would be much less desirable than the proposed location and layout.
- 11) The proposed detached garage will exceed the minimum side-yard setback of ten (10) feet
- 12) The purpose of the detached garage is for personal property, which, by the covenants of the Northfork Home Owner's Association, is prohibited from being stored outside.
- 13) Due to the eight (8) foot vertical drop-off that spans the entire width of the property, there are special conditions to our property that do not generally apply to other properties in our zoning district.
- 14) The grading of the lot was not the result of any special requests from us.
- 15) The literal interpretation of the provisions of the City Code would deprive us of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district, namely the right to have additional garage space on the premises.
- 16) Placing the garage in the backyard (as some others have done in the Northfork development), would require moving the drain field which would require extraordinary costs.

We believe that for the reasons listed above, this variance request meets the League of Minnesota Cities three (3) factor test. We believe we are using the property in a reasonable manner and our variance request is based on the uniqueness of our specific lot. The proposed garage will also not alter the essential character of our property or neighborhood.