

Village of Central Square
ZONING BOARD MINUTES
May 13, 2025
Hearing 6:45 PM ~ Meeting 7 PM

Board Members Present: Chairman Andy Smolnik, board members Carlos Hunter and Mike Plantz.

Village Staff in Attendance: Zoning Board Secretary Krista Ruzekowicz, Codes Enforcement Officer Ed Cusato and Village Attorney Joseph Frateschi.

Public Attendance: Village Residents: Deb Graves, Mary L. Wescott, Robin Hansen, Karen and Wayne Skinner, Laura Maylone, Pamela and Chris Propheter, Gregg, Agatha and Benjamin Tweedy.

Meeting Called to Order: At 6:44 p.m. Chairman Andy Smolnik called the Public Hearing to order. All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Chair Smolnik.

PUBLIC HEARING regarding the Use Variance request for 3206 East Avenue (the applicant, Gregg Tweedy was not in attendance at this time).

Laura Maylone stated that a hearing was brought to the Village Board previously and that application was denied. The area has been in chaos since they moved in. It's not been cleaned up and there are trucks in and out at all times of the day and night. Tenants are in and out of there about every 6 months.

Code Enforcement Officer Cusato said that previously Mr. Tweedy brought a zone change request in front of the Village Planning Board and the Village Board of Trustees and that the zone change request was denied.

Attorney Frateschi stated that this is a separate matter, and a different process, and Mr. Tweedy has met the criteria for this process brought in front of the ZBA. Ms. Maylone said that this area should be where people choose to place roots.

Mr. Tweedy arrived at 6:50 p.m. and stated he was going to originally demolish the carriage house, but it had beautiful wood inside that he wanted to preserve. This and surrounding areas are in a housing shortage. Price increases in housing for young couples have become astronomical; homes are now selling for

thousands of dollars more than expected. Mr. Tweedy wants to bring quality people into the community and by upgrading the properties, he can accomplish this. He's improved two homes so far; one home was vacant, full of trash and condemned. The carriage house is already hooked up to water, sewer and electricity. There is no downside to this other than 2 to 3 more people living in the Village.

Chairman Smolnik asked Mr. Tweedy if there was anyone currently living in the carriage house since the neighbors spoke of the traffic in and out. Mr. Tweedy stated that there is no one living in the carriage house.

Wayne Skinner asked the board if they had walked the property; the ZBA members all said they had not, but they had driven by the property.

Mr. Skinner stated that there have been lots of tenants in the main house; possibly this is the 5th tenant now and most have been "not nice" people renting the home. Trucks are going in and out of the driveway from midnight to 4 a.m. There is a large dump at the back of the main house and debris blocking the sidewalks at times and high grass in the backyard as well. Mr. Skinner provided photographs to the Board he had taken at different times concerning the debris in the backyard and noted that "this has been a dump site for 5 years". Mr. Skinner said it's not a pleasant experience living next to this property and that Mr. Tweedy doesn't follow through with his promises and asked the ZBA to visit the site before they decided on the use variance request.

Mr. Tweedy said that there were trucks in and out of the driveway when the actual construction was going on and that he spent additional money on gutters, a retaining wall and drains to divert the water from Mr. Skinner's property. The wooden posts that are seen in one picture are going to be a privacy fence once the backyard is cleaned up. It has taken 4 years to rebuild and remodel 4 buildings; he wished that it was a perfect transition, but it will be right in the end.

Board member Carlos Hunter asked Mr. Tweedy about the old wood in one of the piles shown in Mr. Skinner's photos and Mr. Tweedy said that the lumber is for the fence that will eventually be built. Everything in the piles is on pallets.

Chairman Smolnik asked Mr. Tweedy and Mr. Skinner how long the property has been in transition and Mr. Skinner stated 5 years.

Chairman Smolnik held up one of the photos and asked Mr. Tweedy to explain what was shown in the picture. Mr. Tweedy stated that items are stored on a pallet to organize them – some items on the pallets are kept for other projects and other items are removed and taken to the dump.

Mr. Skinner stated that he disagrees with everything that Mr. Tweedy just said. The new retaining wall that Mr. Tweedy spoke of doesn't hold back any water like the old cinderblock retaining wall did. Mr. Tweedy also lowered his driveway and now causes more water damage to Mr. Skinner's property. The 6" drainage pipes that Mr. Tweedy installed are now filled with gravel and no water is moving through them. Mr. Skinner went on to say that with all the people moving in and out and using his driveway as a turnaround or U-turns, he eventually installed 3 pipes to delineate his property, which was suggested by the police officers who came to his home after being called several times for the neighbors on his property. A year ago, Mr. Skinner received a citation from CEO Cusato for the illegal fence. Mr. Skinner removed the illegal fence/pipes. Furthermore, Mr. Skinner had to find a surveyor during Covid to correctly identify his property even though (he stated) that the Village had the survey map in the office.

Chairman Smolnik asked what the outcome of the survey was, and Mr. Skinner stated that Mr. Tweedy's line is 6" closer to Mallory Road and that Mr. Skinner's surveyor determined that Mr. Tweedy's surveyor measured from a post that wasn't permanent.

Attorney Frateschi said that there is obvious animosity in this dispute but advised the ZBA to visit the property before deciding the outcome. He then asked Mr. Skinner how having the carriage house occupied would have adverse effects on water flows through his property. Mr. Skinner stated that there probably would be people going through his yard and would eventually wash out the driveway.

Attorney Frateschi then asked Mr. Tweedy if having the carriage house occupied would make the area quieter for the neighbors. Mr. Tweedy stated that once the carriage house becomes occupied it would be necessary for him to clean up the backyard, build the fence and the items would be moved out of sight.

Ms. Maylone said it's been this way for 5 years now.

CEO Cusato stated that when the buildings were under construction, he was unable to issue a citation for Mr. Tweedy to remove the items in question.

Robin Hansen said that the carriage house looks beautiful and has seen the images online of the inside. The issue Ms. Hansen has is that the carriage house was rented but was only supposed to be for storage and an office. Ms. Hansen said that it seemed the permitting was under the radar and now the Village is in a pickle and asked the ZBA to postpone its decision and possibly meet with the Planning and Village Boards.

CEO Cusato stated that the Village Board can give their opinion on the matter but that the Zoning Board of Appeals has the final say. Mr. Cusato went on to say that now that Mr. Tweedy wants to rent out the carriage house and has finalized the construction, the Village can prompt him to clean up the debris and satisfy the neighbors.

Mr. Skinner stated that Mr. Tweedy went ahead and previously rented out the barn without the proper certificate of occupancy.

Mr. Tweedy stated to everyone that none of this would change the past, but the fact is, the carriage house had been occupied but he was cited by CEO Cusato for not having the proper certificate of occupancy. Mr. Tweedy wasn't trying to pull over anything on anyone; he was trying to help a single mom. The tenant moved out and Mr. Tweedy didn't charge her rent because it was right before Christmas. Ultimately, Mr. Tweedy needs to justify saving the carriage house by renting it out and that during the rebuild he was focused on the front yard and the structure itself. He will clean up the backyard.

Chairman Smolnik asked how long it will take to clean everything up and Mr. Tweedy stated that most of the wood will be used for the fence and that the remainder will be moved behind the pole barn.

Attorney Frateschi asked if giving Mr. Skinner a privacy fence would help with the approval of the use variance. Mr. Skinner said that the fence would have to be two stories high since that's the height of the carriage house. Attorney Frateschi stated that a fence that high would be impossible.

Mr. Skinner said that now the only leverage we have is to allow the occupancy of the carriage house and only then will the backyard be cleaned up.

Mr. Tweedy asked the ZBA to please not delay this. There is a nice young family that would like to move in as soon as permission is given.

CEO Cusato stated that the County did approve the 239 review.

Attorney Frateschi asked if the approval could be made on the condition that the debris and mess be cleaned up.

Mr. Skinner said that this was supposed to be cleaned up 3 years ago.

Chris Propheter spoke up and said that what is going on in Mr. Skinner's yard (the additional water) must be the changes Mr. Tweedy made to his property – what else could it be since he's now having these drainage issues when Mr. Skinner didn't have them previously.

Laura Maylone said that she's unable to walk behind the property to Crossroads Park because of all the debris from Mr. Tweedy's property. She wants to know how allowing him to rent out the carriage house would benefit the community. There would continue to be trucks going in and out of there and thinks that there is a warehouse or something under the homes.

Mary Wescott is happy that the turkey vultures are gone.

Deb Graves stated that years ago the property lines were so close; this makes it difficult if you don't get along.

Attorney Frateschi advised the ZBA that it would be beneficial for them to go and walk around the site and then follow up with the hearing next Tuesday.

The Zoning Board of Appeals agreed that they should walk the property and reconvene next week.

Mike Plantz made a motion to adjourn the hearing at 7:45 p.m. until Tuesday, May 20th at 7 p.m., seconded by Carlos Hunter. All were in favor.

Approval of prior Minutes

The motion to approve April 15, 2025, minutes was made by Mike Plantz and seconded by Carlos Hunter. All were in favor.

The next Zoning Board Hearing and Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20th at 7 p.m.

Adjournment

At 7:57 p.m. Mike Plantz moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Carlos Hunter. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Krista Ruzekowicz
Zoning Board Secretary

After reviewing the Boardroom schedule, the Zoning Board Hearing and Meeting will be held on Friday, May 23rd at 7 p.m.

Approved July 15, 2025