

# ADDENDUM

## PETITION FOR GRANT OF VARIANCE, APPEAL, OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUIRED STATEMENTS

*The following is designed to help the petitioner in developing their statements for variance, appeal or special exception, as required by Part C of the petition form.*

### 1. Unique Property Limitations

Unique physical limitations of the property such as steep slopes or wetlands that prevent an applicant from complying with the provisions of the ordinance can be considered for a grant of variance. (However, be advised that even if unique physical limitations exist, the variance still may not be granted.) Valid unique property limitations that are not generally shared by other properties can be considered but must prevent compliance with ordinance requirements.

The circumstances of the applicant (growing family, need for a larger garage, wanting a better view, etc.) are not factors in deciding variances. Nearby ordinance violations, prior variances or lack of objections from neighbors do not provide a basis for granting a variance.

Unique features of this property which prevent compliance with the terms of the ordinance include:

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### 2. Unnecessary Hardships

An applicant may not claim unnecessary hardship because of conditions which are self imposed or created by a prior owner (for example, excavating a pond on a vacant lot and then arguing there is no room for the home and requesting setback variances). Courts have also determined that economic or financial hardships do not justify granting a variance. When determining whether an unnecessary hardship exists, the property as a whole is considered, rather than just a portion of the parcel (if an applicant prefers to build by the water but can't due to the water setback, but can build on the rear of the lot without a variance, the water setback shall be denied). The property owner bears the burden of proving unnecessary hardship.

For an area variance, unnecessary hardship exists when compliance would unreasonably prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose (leaving the property owner without any use that is permitted on the property), or, would render conformity with such restrictions unnecessarily burdensome. The Board of Adjustment must

consider the purpose of the zoning restriction, the zoning restriction's effect on the property, and the short term, long term and cumulative effects of a variance on the neighborhood, the community and on the public interests.

The unnecessary hardship is, and, is present because:

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### **3. No Harm to Public Interests**

A variance may not be granted which results in harm to public interests. In applying this test, the Board of Adjustment must consider the impacts of the proposal and the cumulative impacts of similar projects on the interests of the neighbor, the entire community and the general public. These interests are listed as objectives in the purpose statement of the ordinance and include, but are not limited to:

- Protect public, safety and welfare
- Protect property values
- Permit the careful planning and efficient maintenance of highway systems
- Encourage the protection of groundwater resources
- Preserve wetlands
- Conserve soil, water and forest resources
- Prevent water pollution
- Protect fish and wildlife habitat
- Preserve natural scenic beauty

A variance will not be contrary to the public interests because:

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