

Memorandum

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Allison Eddins , Senior planner
DATE: November 25, 2025
SUBJECT: 5920 Hodgson Road - Variance request - James Blood
ITEM NUMBER: 7.A
SECTION: NEW BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

To adopt Resolution No. 25-89, approving a variance to reduce the front yard setback requirement from 170.9 feet to 58 feet (+/- 10 feet) for the construction of a future home at 5920 Hodgson Road, subject to the following conditions:

1. Any future home on this property, including an attached garage, must meet the front yard setback requirement approved with this resolution. Side and rear yard setbacks must meet the standards in [Section 107-67 \(e\)](#).
2. This approval will expire after one year if a building permit has not been issued and work has not begun on a future home. The applicant may request a one year extension as permitted in [Section 103-4](#).
3. This approval is subject to a 5-day appeal period. Once the appeal period expires, a building permit may be issued. A building permit must be obtained before any construction activity begins.

This action is based on the following findings of fact:

1. The applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that is allowed in the R1, Detached Residential District.
2. A unique circumstance resulting in a practical difficulty is present. The unique circumstance is a result of the non-conforming front yard setbacks of the two abutting flag lots.
3. The character of the neighborhood will not be altered by the reduced front yard setback for the construction of a future home.

INTRODUCTION

The applicant, James Blood, is the owner of the vacant lot at 5920 Hodgson Road. Mr. Blood would like to sell the lot for the development of a future single-family detached house. The lot is 100 feet wide and 180 feet deep making it a standard lot. The lot is in the R1 zoning district and immediately abuts three lots. Two of the three abutting lots are flag lots. The houses on the flag lots have significantly larger front yard setbacks than the other nearby houses.

Mr. Blood is requesting a variance to reduce the front yard setback requirement for 5920 Hodgson Road from 170.9 feet to 58 feet (+/- 10 feet). Staff is in support of this variance

request.

DISCUSSION

Development Code Requirements

Section 107-65 (d) (1) (g) (1) states that when a newly constructed dwelling unit on a vacant lot abuts properties with front yard setbacks that exceed the minimum setback allowed in the zoning district by more than 15 feet, that dwelling unit must have a front yard setback that is equal to the average front yard setbacks of the immediately abutting lots plus or minus 10 feet. Applying this code standard, the front yard setback requirement for a future home at 5920 Hodgson Road would be 170.9 feet.

<u>Abutting Lot</u>	<u>R1 Front Yard Setback Requirement</u>	<u>Actual Front Yard Setback</u>
5900 Hodgson Road	25 - 40 feet	189.3 feet
5910 Hodgson Road		73.9 feet
5930 Hodgson Road		249.5 feet
Average Front Yard Setback		170.9 feet

Variance Criteria (Section 103-163)

When considering a variance request, the commission must determine whether the ordinance causes the property owner practical difficulty and find that granting the variances is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance. Practical difficulty is defined as:

1. *Reasonable Manner.* The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the Shoreview Development Regulations.
2. *Unique Circumstances.* The plight of the property owner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the property owner.
3. *Character of Neighborhood.* The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.

Applicant Statement

The applicant states that a 170.9 foot front yard setback requirement for a lot that is 180 feet deep would render the lot undevelopable. The applicant is requesting a setback range that is the average of the two nearest standard lots and is requesting that the flag lots not be considered when calculating the setback requirement for a future home at 5920 Hodgson Road. The average setback of the two nearest standard lots is 58 feet.

Staff Review

The request was reviewed by staff in accordance with the variance criteria. Upon review, staff believes that a practical difficulty is present.

1. *Reasonable Manner.* Single-family detached homes are permitted in the R1, Detached Residential District provided certain dimensional standards are met. Any future home on the lot would be required to meet the side and rear yard setbacks requirements, along with the impervious surface coverage and building height standards.
2. *Unique Circumstances.* The plight of the property owner is created by the non-conforming front yard setbacks of the two abutting flag lots. They make the lot

unbuildable without a variance.

3. *Neighborhood Character.* Staff has determined that granting the variance would not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. Allowing a front yard setback reduction from 170.9 feet to 58 feet (+/- 10 feet) for a future home would help maintain the character of the neighborhood. The smaller setback is more in-line with the average setback in the neighborhood.

Public Comment

Property owners within 150' were notified of the request. At the time of this report, no public comments have been received.

Agency Comment

Staff reached out to the relevant departments within Shoreview for comments or concerns regarding the proposed variance. Staff did not receive any comments or concerns.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the planning commission adopt Resolution No. 25-89 approving the variance request to reduce the front yard setback from 170.9 feet to 58 feet (+/- 10 feet) for the construction of a future home on the vacant lot at 5920 Hodgson Road, subject to the following conditions:

1. Any future home on this property, including an attached garage, must meet the front yard setback requirement approved with this resolution. Side and rear yard setbacks must meet the standards in [Section 107-67 \(e\)](#).
2. This approval will expire after one year if a building permit has not been issued and work has not begun on a future home. The applicant may request a one year extension as permitted in [Section 103-4](#).
3. This approval is subject to a 5-day appeal period. Once the appeal period expires, a building permit may be issued for the proposed project. A building permit must be obtained before any construction activity begins.

This action is based on the following findings of fact:

1. The applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that is allowed in the R1, Detached Residential District.
2. A unique circumstance resulting in a practical difficulty is present. The unique circumstance is a result of the non-conforming front yard setbacks of the two abutting flag lots.
3. The character of the neighborhood will not be altered by the reduced front yard setback for the construction of a future home.

ATTACHMENTS

[Location Map](#)
[Certificate of Survey](#)
[Applicant's Narrative](#)
[Resolution 25-89](#)