Tax Map/Block/Parcel
No. 77 4 395

Building Permit/Zoning
Certificate BP-03-0033

Case ZA-725

Official Decision
Zoning Administrator
Carroll County, Maryland

APPLICANT: Debbie Lauer
1074 Hoods Mill Road
Woodbine, Maryland 21797

REQUEST: A variance from the required minimum lot size of 3 acres to 2.231 acres for animals, a variance from 200 Ft. to 98 Ft. and 102 Ft. from any lot less than 3 acres to construct a building.

LOCATION: 1074 Hoods Mill Road
Woodbine, MD 21797

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS: Code of Public Local Laws and Ordinances, Chapters 223-75, 223-16, and 223-181

HEARING HELD: February 4, 2003

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Based on the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the variance is denied.

The Applicant is proposing to raise and house 2 adult alpacas on the property, with the potential for 4 animals after breeding. To cover the possibility of twins, the Applicant is requesting a variance from the minimum lot size of 3 acres to 2.231 acres for the maximum of 5 animals. The purpose of the animals is the selling of their fleece; however the raising of these animals by the Applicant is more towards a hobby than a business venture. These animals are small and can weigh up to 150 pounds. Since, these animals are pack animals, you cannot have just one, because one alone will die. The animals are registered and are closely monitored by the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association. Since these animals are a substantial investment, the owners are very careful to maintain strict health measures and excellent housekeeping practices. It is typical to have double fencing. There is an outer fence that is like a split rail fence with a field fence with 4 x 2 squares. After a 5 Ft. space, there is another inner fence, which is another metal field fence with "T" posts. The fencing is used primarily to keep other animals out and from bringing in diseases to the Alpacas. The animals do not have hooves, but pads like a dog. Therefore, they would not destroy a yard by pulling the grass from the roots. There food is supplemented with free choice hay/grain and pellet feed. Since Alpacas are part of the camel family, they require approximately 1 Qt. of water per day, per animal. The Applicant intends to build a 20 Ft. x 20 Ft. building, with a 13 Ft. peak that would have (2) 10 Ft. x 10 Ft. stalls with an open run located in the front for the animals,

which will match the existing house. The surrounding area is agricultural in nature.

A neighbor was present at the hearing opposing the Applicant's request. The opposition was based on the infringement ability to peacefully enjoy their properties. The development comprises of approximately 20 homes, with some raising horses. However, the folks raising horses have much larger lots. The lot sizes within the development range from 1-1/2 acre to 32 acres. The other concern was regarding the conservation of property values. The building the Applicant is proposing to build would be approximately 228 Ft. from the opposing neighbor's house. In researching Alpacas, it was recommended that pasture areas be alternated. This would be difficult for the Applicant to this, since there is not enough acreage.

Since the amount of acreage is only 2.231 and not closer to 3 acres, the Applicant has not yet purchased the Alpacas, and the barn has not yet been built, there is not enough basis in which to place undue hardship or practical difficulty for the Applicant. Therefore, this variance is denied.

NOTE:

Appeals of decision made pursuant to Chapter 223-183 may be made to the Board of Zoning Appeals within thirty (30) days of the date of the Zoning Administrators decision in accordance with Chapter 223-188 of the Code of Public Local Laws & Ordinances.

A decision of the Zoning Administrator made pursuant to Chapter 223-183 is final, and constitutes a zoning action. Unless timely appealed, parties may not thereafter challenge the Zoning Administrator's decision.

FEBRUARY 13, 2003
DATE

Ralph E. Green
RALPH E. GREEN
ACTING ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

cc: Zoning Enforcement