

**LEROY TOWNSHIP
8156 4 Mile Road
East Leroy, Michigan 49051**

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES
April 1, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER-

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Arbogast at 6:04 pm.

ROLL CALL-

Members present: Travis Arbogast, Ben Belote, Mike VanHouten, and Alternate Rick Hall

Members excused: None

Others present: Zoning Administrator Rob Behnke and (9) individuals.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2026-

A motion was made by Ben Belote for the following slate of Officers for 2026:

Travis Arbogast- Chairperson
Mike VanHouten- Vice Chair
Ben Belote- Secretary

Supported by Mike VanHouten. **Motion carried with unanimous approval.**

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES-

A motion was made by Mike VanHouten to approve the June 28, 2023, meeting minutes as presented, supported by Ben Belote. **Motion carried with unanimous approval.**

PUBLIC COMMENTS (not related to any agenda item)-

None

CALL TO ORDER/ HIBBARD PUBLIC HEARING-

Chairperson Arbogast called the Public Hearing to order at 6:07 pm.

PRESENTATION OF REQUESTED VARIANCES-

Mr. Randy Case, a local architect presenting the Hibbard's, explained the need for (4) variances for the property at 3838 K Drive South. The Hibbard's wish to continue to use the building at 3838 K Drive South, which was a former church, as a retail operation open to the general public for the sale of antiques & goods.

Variance #1- relief of 0.5 acres from the minimum requirement of 1 acre for a retail business
Variance #2- relief of 18 feet from the minimum requirement of 150 feet for lot width
Variance #3- relief of 17 feet from the minimum requirement of 35 feet for front yard setback
Variance #4- relief of 10 parking spaces from the requirement of 15 parking spaces

These variances are being sought under the provisions of Article X (Neighborhood Commercial) and Article XXIII (Parking & Loading Requirements) of the Leroy Township Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Case also explained that the parking area and driveway would be hard gravel and that the handicap parking ramp would be adjusted to meet the required codes.

It was noted that this was the first step in bringing the property into compliance for the operation of a retail business at 3838 K Drive S. If the variances are approved, the Hibbard's would then proceed with the second step, which is a rezoning request.

ZBA MEMBER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS-

Chairperson Arbogast asked if the Township had received any letters, call or emails about the Hibbard public hearing. Zoning Administrator Rob Behnke indicated that the Township Office did not receive any letters, calls, or emails with respect to this public hearing.

Zoning Administration Behnke also noted that all properties within 300 feet of 3838 K Drive South were notified of the public hearing by first class, and a Public Hearing Notice was published in the Battle Creek Shopper.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS-

Mr. Robert Hibbard, 3541 H Drive South, owner of 3838 K Drive South, explained that he purchased the property back in 2006 from the church that owned it. He would like to see the variances approved so that his granddaughter, Eve Hibbard, can operate a retail business there.

Ms. Pam Klett, 3819 K Drive South, spoke in favor of granting the variances so Eve could continue to operate her antique business at 3838 K Drive South.

Ms. Irene Hibbard, 3882 K Drive South, sister to Eve Hibbard, spoke in favor of granting the variances because people in the community like Eve's business, and these people also support the granting of the variances.

Mrs. Karen Hibbard, 3793 K Drive South, mother to Eve, spoke in favor of the variances. She stated that it was their family's goal to preserve older structures in East Leroy, such as the old school house that they converted to their residential home.

CLOSURE OF PUBLIC HEARING-

Chairperson Arbogast closed the Public Hearing at 6:36 pm.

NEW BUSINESS-

A motion was made by Mike VanHouten to approve all (4) variances as submitted by Robert Hibbard for the property at 3838 K Drive South, and as outlined by Mr. Randy Case, and that the granting of these variances meets the requirements outlined under Sec. 38-804 of the Leroy Township Zoning Ordinance, supported by Ben Belote.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Arbogast- Yes

VanHouten- Yes

Belote- Yes

All four variances are approved.

ZBA MEMBER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS-

There were no board member questions or comments.

ADJOURNMENT-

A motion was made by Mike VanHouten to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 pm, supported by Ben Belote.

Motion carried with unanimous support.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

ROB BEHNKE
Zoning Secretary

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