



Grand Ledge Zoning Board of Appeals

Regular Meeting Agenda
Thursday, July 17, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, City Hall
310 Greenwood St., Grand Ledge MI 48837

- I. **Roll Call** – Chair Tim McClung, Vice-Chair Tom Nelson, Secretary Ben Cwayna, Ron Graber, and Alternate Member, Bob Doty
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Audience Participation**
- IV. **Approval of Regular Agenda**
 - A. Motion - To approve the July 17, 2025, Regular Zoning Board of Appeals Agenda
- V. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Motion - To approve the December 19, 2024, Regular Board of Zoning Appeals Minutes
- VI. **Zoning Administrator's Report**
- VII. **Unfinished Business**
- VIII. **New Business**
 - A. **Public Hearing** – In consideration of a request for variances to City Code Chapter 46 – Zoning, Section 46-9(3)(a) (1) & (2) to permit a 6-foot-high, solid wood privacy fence in the E. (Old) Saginaw Highway front yard of the property at 11988 Stone Bluff Drive.
 - B. **Motion** – To approve a request for variances to City Code Chapter 46 – Zoning, Section 46-9(3)(a) (1) & (2) to permit a 6-foot-high, solid wood privacy fence in the E. (Old) Saginaw Highway front yard of the property at 11988 Stone Bluff Drive.
- IX. **Audience Participation**
- X. **Communications from Board Members**
- XI. **Adjournment**

This meeting will be held in person, per the Open Meetings Act, and will be livestreamed via Zoom for informational purposes only. The public is invited to attend in person to participate and offer comments. Written comments can also be submitted to the City Clerk at 310 Greenwood Street, Grand Ledge, MI 48837, or by email at cityhall@cityofgrandledge.com. Please click the link below to join the webinar:
Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82714046574>

Phone one-tap: +13017158592,,82714046574# US (Washington DC), +13052241968,,82714046574# US. Join via audio: +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC), +1 305 224 1968 US, +1 309 205 3325 US, +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), +1 646 876 9923 US (New York), +1 646 931 3860 US, +1 507 473 4847 US, +1 564 217 2000 US, +1 669 444 9171 US, +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose), +1 689 278 1000 US, +1 719 359 4580 US, +1 253 205 0468 US, +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma), +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston), +1 360 209 5623 US, +1 386 347 5053 US, +1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose) Webinar ID: 827 1404 6574
International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82714046574>

DRAFT

GRAND LEDGE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
310 GREENWOOD ST.
GRAND LEDGE MI 48837
(517) 627-2149

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
310 GREENWOOD ST., GRAND LEDGE MI 48837

- I. **ROLL CALL OF ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS** – Chair Tim McClung, Vice-Chair Tom Nelson, Secretary Ben Cwayna, and Board Members Bob Doty (Planning Commission Representative), Ron Graber and Carol Weigel (absent)

OTHERS PRESENT – Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator

II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman McClung led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

The public did not comment.

IV. **APPROVAL OF REGULAR AGENDA**

- A. **Motion** – To approve the Thursday, December 19, 2024, regular Zoning Board of Appeals meeting agenda.

BOARD MEMBER NELSON MOVED, BOARD MEMBER GRABER SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024, REGULAR ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING AGENDA. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. **Motion** – To approve the Thursday, September 19, 2024, regular Zoning Board of Appeals meeting minutes.

BOARD MEMBER CWAYNA MOVED, BOARD MEMBER GRABER SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2024, REGULAR ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VII. **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS**

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Public Hearing** – In consideration of a request for a variance to City Code Chapter 46 – Zoning, Section 46-9(3)b to permit the fence along the side/east property line at 913 Candela Lane that extends up to 7.6 feet at its highest point.

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator, recommended approval of the request for a variance to permit the existing fence along the east property line of 913 Candela Lane that has posts that extend up to 7.6 feet at its maximum height, subject to replacing the fence panels as necessary to obscure the retaining wall on the applicant's property from view of the adjoining property while not increasing the height of the fence as it currently exists, no later than April 30, 2025. She explained that the fence will extend lower to the ground in order to screen the retaining wall in response to the concern expressed by the adjoining property owner at the September 19, 2024, meeting.

Chair McClung opened the public hearing at 7:05 P.M.

Jeff Landon, Attorney representing the applicant, Joanne Theis, explained that the fence contractor will remove the slats in the fence in those areas where the fence is raised above the ground exposing the retaining wall and install new slats that will extend as close to the ground as possible.

Neil Miller, 915 Candela Lane informed the Board that he remains in opposition to the fence, despite the proposed changes to screen the retaining wall. He provided the Board members with emails from some of the neighbors opposing the variance and photos showing the fence from his side of the property line. He also expressed concerns about approval of the variance setting a precedent for future requests to vary the fence height restriction.

Zoning Administrator Stachowiak explained that if the variance were to be approved, it would only set a precedent for someone requesting the exact same variance, under the exact same circumstances in terms of the grade change along the property line.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Chair McClung closed the public hearing at 7:35 P.M.

- B. **Motion** – In consideration of a request for a variance to City Code Chapter 46 – Zoning, Section 46-9(3)b to permit the fence along the side/east property line at 913 Candela Lane that extends up to 7.6 feet at its highest point.

The Board members discussed the new slats extending as low to the ground as possible to provide maximum screening of the retaining wall.

BOARD MEMBER CWAYNA MOVED, BOARD MEMBER NELSON SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR A VARIANCE OF UP 1.6 FEET TO THE 6 FOOT FENCE HEIGHT RESTRICTION TO PERMIT THE FENCE ALONG THE SIDE/EAST PROPERTY LINE AT 913 CANDELA LANE, SUBJECT TO REPLACING THE SLATS IN THE FENCE AS NECESSARY TO GET SAID FENCE AS CLOSE TO THE GROUND AS POSSIBLE TO OBSCURE THE RETAINING WALL ON THE SUBJECT PROPERTY FROM VIEW OF THE ADJOINING PROPERTY WHILE NOT INCREASING THE HEIGHT OF THE FENCE AS IT

CURRENTLY EXISTS, BASED UPON THE FINDINGS OF FACT AS DETAILED IN THE STAFF REPORT, AND TO GIVE IMMEDIATE EFFECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE VARIANCE, AS NECESSARY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF PROPERTY AND AS HEREBY CERTIFIED ON THE RECORD. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. **Motion** – To approve the Rules of Procedure

Zoning Administrator Stachowiak reviewed the draft rules of procedure. She explained that they are very similar to the City’s Council’s rules and those that were recently adopted by the Planning Commission. She further explained that the primary purpose of the rules is to establish the proper procedures for responding to questions raised by members of the public, without engaging in a dialog during public hearings or periods of audience participation.

BOARD MEMBER CWAYNA MOVED, BOARD MEMBER DOTY SECONDED TO APPROVE THE RULES OF PROCEDURE, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

CHAIR MCCLUNG ADJOURNED THE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024, ZONING BOARD OF APPEAL REGULAR MEETING, AT 8:00 P.M.

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator

Tim McClung, Chair

**CITY OF GRAND LEDGE
STAFF REPORT
VARIANCE REQUEST**

GENERAL INFORMATION

DATE: July 10, 2025

APPLICANT/OWNER: Brandon Schumacher
11988 Stone Bluff Drive
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

PROPERTY SIZE: 103.27' x 146.78' = 15,157 square feet

ZONING: R-MD, Single Family Residential

EXISTING LAND USE: Single Family Residential

SURROUNDING LAND USES: N: Vacant
S: Single Family Residential
E: Single Family Residential
W: Single Family Residential

SURROUNDING ZONING: N: R-HD, Multiple Family Residential
S: R-MD, Single Family Residential
E: R-MD, Single Family Residential
W: R-MD, Single Family Residential

REQUEST

This is a request for a request for variances to City Code Chapter 46 – Zoning, Section 46-9(3)(a) (1) & (2) to permit a 6-foot-high, wood privacy fence in the E. (Old) Saginaw Highway front yard of the property at 11988 Stone Bluff Drive. Zoning Ordinance, Section 46-9(3)(a) (1) & (2) restrict the height of fences in front yards to a maximum of three (3) feet and require that they be of an ornamental nature, such as picket, split rail, or wrought-iron-style fencing, with at least 50 percent open spaces, uniformly distributed along the surface of the fence. Variances of three (3) feet to the height restriction for a front yard fence and variances to permit the fence to be a solid wood privacy fence are being requested.

Permitted	Proposed	Variance
3-foot fence height in front yard	6-foot fence height in front yard	3 feet to the front yard fence height limitation
50 % visually open ornamental style fence	Solid wood privacy fence	Solid wood privacy fence

Corner lots have two front yards. These are the areas between the front and side walls of the house and the property lines along both streets. The subject property is located at the southeast corner of Stone Bluff Drive and Old Saginaw Highway. The proposed fence is 6 foot high and

would extend 24 feet into the front yard from the side/north wall of the house towards Old Saginaw Highway.

(1) The Zoning Ordinance establishes the following basic criteria, all of which must be satisfied before a variance can be approved.

(a) Will not be contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of this chapter.

The proposed 6 foot-high, wood privacy fence will not be contrary to the public interest or to the intent and purpose of the ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance permits fences in front yards to a maximum height of 4 feet, that are of an ornamental style and are at least 50% visually open. The intent of the fence height limitation and the restrictions on the style of fencing that is permitted in front yards is to prevent vision obstructions when turning at street intersections and exiting driveways and for aesthetic purposes as privacy fences in front yards create a “wall” effect that diminishes the appearance of the streetscape. In this case, the proposed fence will not impede vision for motorists in the area as it will be setback more than 30 feet from the edge of the Old Saginaw Highway, will be well outside of the 25-foot corner clearance area at the intersection of Stone Bluff Drive and Old Saginaw Highway and does not impact use of any driveways in the area. Also, as shown on the attached photographs, the property to the east already has a 6-foot-high privacy fence that is located 3 feet from the sidewalk north of its rear property line along Old Saginaw Highway. The applicant’s fence is proposed to be located along the same line and will appear as just an extension of the existing fence to the east. Since there is already an existing 6-foot-high, solid fence adjacent to the subject property, approval of the requested variances will not diminish the appearance of the streetscape as it currently exists. Given these circumstances, the applicant’s proposal will not be contrary to the intent and purpose of the ordinance, and thus approval of the variance will not set a negative precedent for future requests to vary the fence restrictions in front yards on corner lots.

(b) Shall not permit the establishment within a district of any use which is not permitted by right within that zone district, or any use or dimensional variance for which a conditional use permit or a temporary use permit is required.

Not applicable.

(c) Will not cause a substantial adverse effect upon property values in the immediate vicinity or in the district in which the property of the applicant is located.

See the response to paragraph (a) above.

- (d) **Is not one where the specific conditions relating to the property are so general or recurrent in nature as to make the formulation of a general regulation for such conditions reasonably practical.**

By assuring that there is something unique about a particular property to differentiate it from a claim that could be made by most other property owners seeking a similar variance, the intent of the ordinance standard is preserved. In other words, there must be circumstances that directly relate to the subject property that are unique to the extent that approval of the variance will not be contrary to the intent of the ordinance standard and thus, denial of the variance would create an unnecessary hardship on the applicant. The unique circumstances in this case are that there is already a 6-foot-high privacy fence on the adjoining property to the east in the same location as what is being proposed the applicant, the fence will be located well outside of the corner clearance area at the intersection of Stone Bluff Drive and Old Saginaw Highway and there are no driveways that would be impacted by the fence. The overwhelming majority of other corner lots in the City would not share these same circumstances.

- (e) **Will relate only to property that is under control of the applicant.**

The proposed fence will be located entirely on the applicant’s property. It will not impact visibility for motorists in the area, and since the variance will merely result in continuing the fence line that has already been established by the existing fence on the property to the east, it will not change or create any negative impacts on the appearance of the area.

Based upon this evaluation, the applicant’s request complies with all of the basic criteria required for granting variances.

- (2) **When all of the foregoing basic conditions can be satisfied, the ordinance establishes the following special conditions for further evaluation before granting a variance. The ordinance states that a variance may be granted when any one of the following special conditions can be clearly demonstrated.**
 - (a) **Where there are practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships which prevent carrying out the strict letter of this chapter. These hardships or difficulties shall not be deemed economic, but shall be evaluated in terms of the use of a particular parcel of land.**
 - (b) **Where there are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or physical conditions such as narrowness, shallowness, shape, or topography of the property involved, or to the intended use of the property, that do not generally apply to other property or uses in the same zoning district. Such circumstances or conditions shall not have resulted from any act of the applicant subsequent to the adoption of this chapter.**

The applicant's request complies with special condition (a). As described in the preceding paragraphs of the report, the location of the proposed fence will not impact visibility for motorists in the area and there already exists a 6-foot-high privacy fence on the adjoining property to east in the same location as what is being proposed by the applicant. Since these circumstances are not typical of most other corner lots in the City, the variances could be approved without setting a negative precedent for future requests to vary the fence ordinance standards in front yards, particularly on corner lots. In other words, the proposed fence will not be contrary to the intent and purpose of the ordinance and thus, denial of the variances would create an unnecessary hardship on the applicant

RECOMMENDATION

The following motion is offered for the Board's consideration:

“I make a motion to approve the request for variances to permit a 6-foot-high, wood privacy fence in the Old Saginaw Highway front yard of the property at 11988 Stone Bluff Drive that would be setback 3 feet from the public sidewalk along Old Saginaw Highway and no closer to Stone Bluff Drive than the rear wall of the house, based upon the findings of fact as detailed in the staff report, and to give immediate effect to the approval of the variances, as hereby certified on the record.”

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak
Zoning Administrator



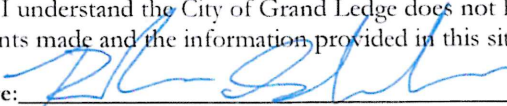
VARIANCE APPLICATION

Applicant(s)	Brandon M.H. Schumacher		Phone Number	(989) 917-0505
Email Address <i>Required</i>	brandon.m.h.schumacher@gmail.com			
Address	11988 Stone Bluff Drive		Daytime	
	Grand Ledge MI 48837			
Interest in Properties <i>(Check One)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Represent Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Option to Buy <input type="checkbox"/> Lessee <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
Complete address of the property request to be reviewed:	400- 5200 ⁰⁵¹ - 000-120-00		Current Zoning District	
	Owner: Brandon Schumacher + Danielle Schumacher Address: 11988 Stone Bluff Drive Grand Ledge MI 48837		R-MD Phone Number (989) 917-0505	
Lot Size: Width: <u>103.27</u> Length: <u>146.78</u> Area: <u>15,157.97 sq ft</u>				
Legal Description:	<i>Indicate attached if needed.</i> See attached.			
Proposed use of property:	<i>Indicate attached if needed.</i> See attached.			

City of Grand Ledge – Planning & Zoning – Variance Application

Estimate the following:	<input type="checkbox"/> General Traffic Volume: <u>NA</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Total Population Increase: <u>NA</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Population per Acre: <u>NA</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Hours of Operation: <u>NA</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Total number of employees: <u>NA</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Total building area proposed: <u>Approx 1700 sq ft</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Parking Spaces: <u>NA</u>
Application must include photographs of the property, copies of any other required permits, and a site plan, as follows:	<input type="checkbox"/> Drawn to scale of 1" = 100' <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing and proposed structures (buildings, trash receptacles, landscaping, etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing and proposed parking areas and driveways <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing and proposed roads, easements and other access points <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flood plain elevations, if applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zoning classifications of all abutting land within 300 feet

I stipulate and understand the site plan review, if approved by the City of Grand Ledge, does not guarantee I may proceed with the proposed development. I understand there may be additional permits required to meet trade codes and other governmental requirements, and I understand the City of Grand Ledge does not have any power or authority over these additional permits. I certify the statements made and the information provided in this site plan review application are true, accurate and complete.

Applicant Signature:  Date: 5/30/20

For Office Use Only -----	Required Reviews	Approve / Deny		Initials
Fee Paid: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Zoning Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Date Received: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning Commission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Legal Description: Lot 128 Fieldstone Farms, City of Grand Ledge, Split from 400-014-100-004-04 for 2017

Abutting land zoning classifications within 300 feet: R-MD, B-1

Proposed variance: A variance to allow a fence otherwise complying with the zoning ordinance to extend north into a side yard by 24 feet, run east in the same side yard by approximately 73 feet, and run south in the same side yard by 24 feet to where a fence could be erected without a variance.

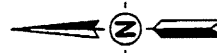
Without a variance, the fence would have to start from the northern most corner of the dwelling and run east. The result would be losing approximately 1700 square feet of usable, practical "rear yard" space if the zoning ordinance is applied as written.

PLOT PLAN

For:
 Mayberry Homes
 1650 Kendale Blvd., Suite 200
 East Lansing, MI 48823

Survey Address:
 11988 Stone Bluff Drive
 Grand Ledge, MI 48837
 ID: 400-051-000-128-00

Legal Description (as provided): Lot 128, Fieldstone Farms No. 5, City of Grand Ledge, Eaton County, Michigan, according to the recorded plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 13 of Plats, Page 228, Eaton County Records.



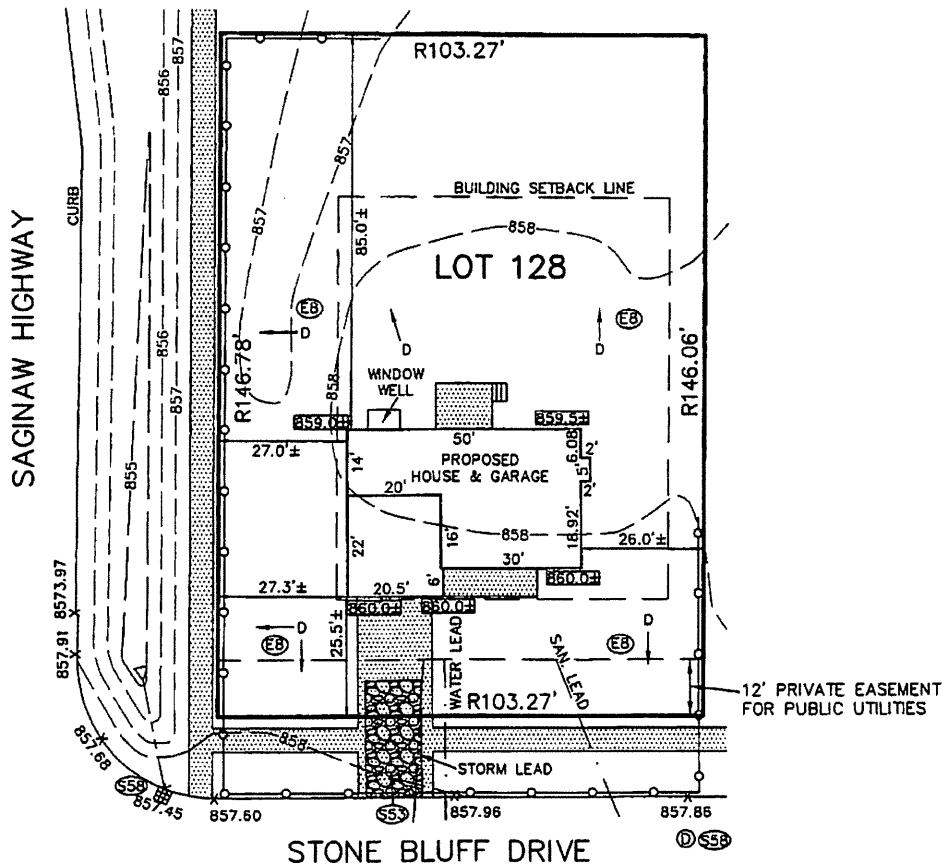
1" = 30'

Soil Erosion Control Notes:

1. Clean roads daily
2. Clean catch basin filters once a week.
3. Inspect and maintain silt fence once a week.
4. Keep soil erosion permit posted at all times until site is stabilized.
5. All BMP's must remain in working order until site is stabilized.
6. Excavated soil to be used as fill on site.
7. Standard basement foundation.

NOTES:

1. A LOT SURVEY IS REQUIRED FOR THE EXACT LOCATION OF FENCE AND PROPERTY LINES.
2. ALL EASEMENTS MAY NOT BE SHOWN.



PROPOSED TOP OF BASEMENT WALL = 861.0±

PROPOSED FINISH GARAGE FLOOR = 860.0±

This plan was made at the direction of the parties hereon and intended solely for their immediate use and no survey has been made and no property lines were monumented, all easements recorded or unrecorded may not be shown, unless specifically noted, and no dimensions are intended for use in establishing property lines.

- R = Recorded Dimension
- x = Existing Elevation
- = Silt Fence
- D = Surface Drainage
- = Deed Line
- 800.00 = Proposed Finish Grade
- = Distance Not to Scale
- ▨ = Deck, Porch, Sidewalk, & Patio Areas



KEBS, INC. KYES ENGINEERING
 BRYAN LAND SURVEYS

2116 HASLETT ROAD, HASLETT, MI 48840
 PH. 517-339-1014 FAX. 517-339-8047

13432 PRESTON DRIVE, MARSHALL, MI 49068
 PH. 269-781-9800 FAX. 269-781-9805

David J. Lacross 10/22/20
 DAVID J. LACROSS DATE
 PROFESSIONAL SURVEYOR NO. 57348

DRAWN BY	SLH	SECTION	14, T4N, R4W
FIELD WORK BY	---	JOB NUMBER:	97356.HSE
SHEET	1 OF 2		

SOIL EROSION CONTROL PLAN

	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY 2021	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
TEMP SEC MEASURES	X	X	X	X	X	X						
EXCAVATION	X	X	X	X	X	X						
HOME CONSTRUCTION	X	X	X	X	X	X						
TOPSOIL SPREADING					X	X						
SEEDING & MULCHING					X	X						
FINAL INSPECTION					X	X						

(SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

APPROX. EXCAVATION= 397 CUBIC YDS.

LIMITS OF DISRUPTION= 1' INSIDE OF LOT LINES ON ENTIRE LOT

TEMPORARY EROSION CONTROL TO BE INSTALLED, MAINTAINED AND REMOVED BY BUILDER.

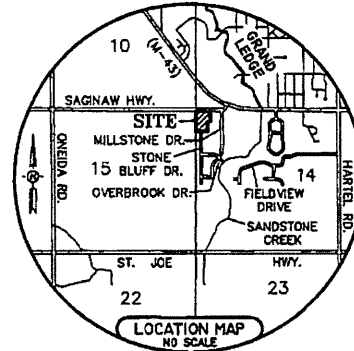
PERMANENT EROSION CONTROL TO BE INSTALLED BY BUILDER AND MAINTAINED BY LANDOWNER

NOTES:

1. CONSTRUCTION DRIVE WILL BE PROVIDED WITH CRUSHED STONE OR CRUSHED CONCRETE SIZE 2"-3"
2. NO WETLANDS WERE LOCATED FOR THIS PLAN.
3. ALL CATCH BASINS ARE TO BE EQUIPPED WITH FILTER CLOTH.

SOIL TYPES:

CvraaB - CONOVER LOAM, 0-4% SLOPES
(ACCORDING TO WEBSOILSURVEY.NRCS.USDA.GOV)



NOTE: ANY STOCKPILING OF SOIL SHALL BE SURROUNDED BY SILT FENCE. SEEDED IF LEFT OVER 6 MONTHS.

STORM WATER FROM THIS SITE WILL NOT ADVERSELY IMPACT ADJACENT PROPERTIES.



**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
S-E-S-C KEYING SYSTEM**

KEY	BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	SYMBOL	WHERE USED
EROSION CONTROLS			
E8	PERMANENT SEEDING		Stabilization method utilized on sites where earth change has been completed (final grading attained).
S51	SILT FENCE		Use adjacent to critical areas, to prevent sediment laden sheet flow from entering these areas.
S53	STABILIZED CONSTRUCTION ACCESS		Used at every point where construction traffic enters or leaves a construction site.
S58	INLET PROTECTION FABRIC DROP		Use at stormwater inlets, especially at construction sites.

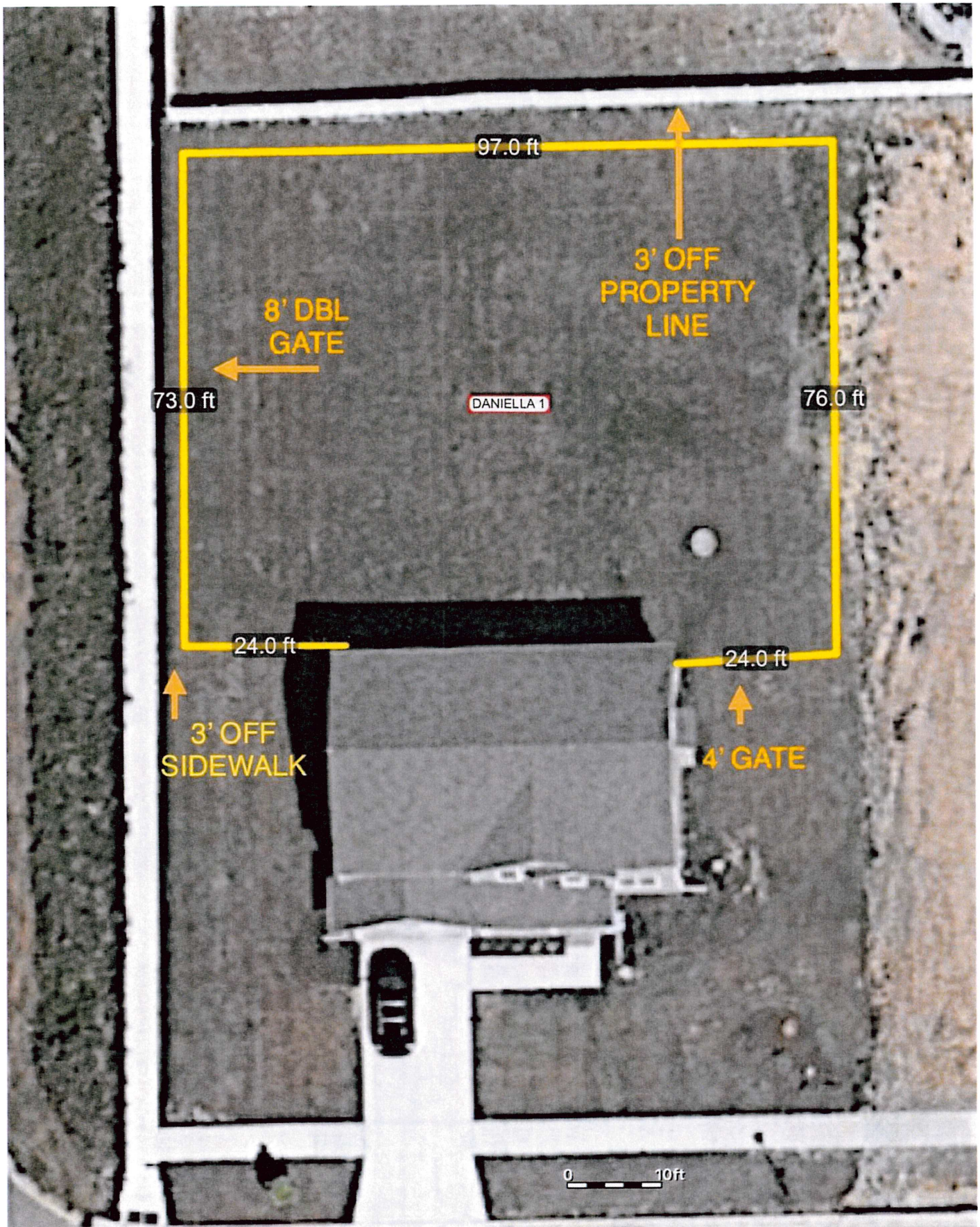


KEBS, INC. KYES ENGINEERING
BRYAN LAND SURVEYS

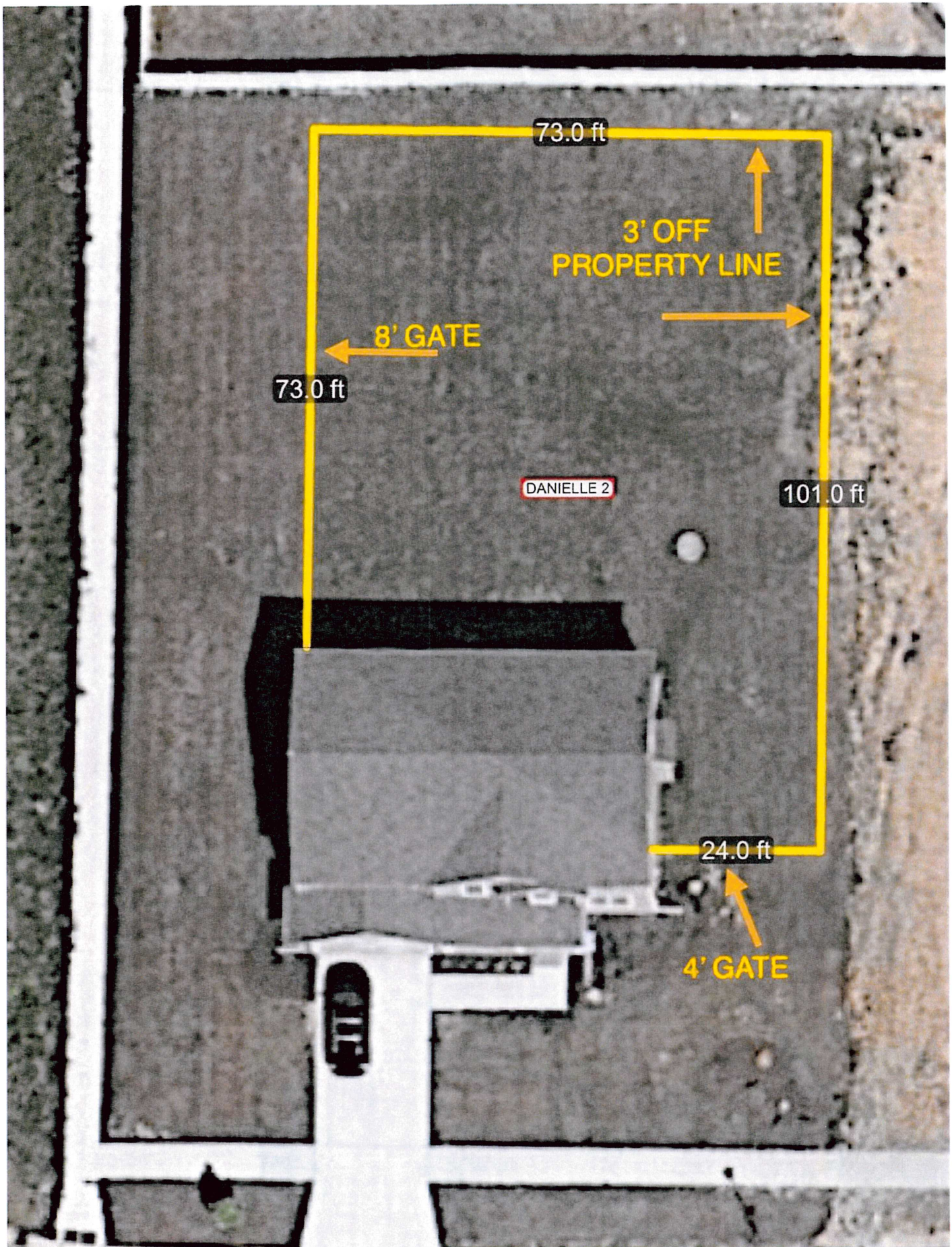
2116 HASLETT ROAD, HASLETT, MI 48840
PH. 517-339-1014 FAX. 517-339-8047

13432 PRESTON DRIVE, MARSHALL, MI 49068
PH. 269-781-9800 FAX. 269-781-9805

DRAWN BY SLH	SECTION 14, T4N, R4W
FIELD WORK BY --	JOB NUMBER:
SHEET 2 OF 2	97356.HSE



Fence with variance

















IMG_7914.jpg

5/30/25, 1:33 PM











