

Tax Map/Block/Parcel
No. 73-6-612
Case 5552

OFFICIAL DECISION
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
CARROLL COUNTY, MARYLAND

APPLICANT: Life House Church, c/o Darrin Spencer
1950 Dickenson Road
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

ATTORNEY: N/A

REQUEST: An application for a conditional use for a church in an existing building and a variance from the limitation of 5 acres in an I-R District.

LOCATION: The site is located at 1332 Londontown Road, Sykesville, MD 21784, on property zoned "I-R" Restricted Industrial District in Election District 5.

BASIS: Code of Public Local Laws and Ordinances, Chapter 223-118, 223-118 (B) and 223-16

HEARING HELD: July 27, 2010

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

On July 27, 2010, the Board of Zoning Appeals (the Board) convened to hear the request for a conditional use for a church in an existing building and a variance from the limitation of 5 acres in an I-R District. Based on the testimony and evidence presented, the Board made the following findings and conclusion:

The Applicant is a church group which has outgrown its current location and wishes to relocate to the subject property. This leased space is 4,400 sq. ft. (+/-) located in the cafeteria of the former London Fog complex. Other portions of the complex are occupied by a video company and a security training facility. Ample parking exists on the site, and the church currently has between 50 and 70 congregants. The neighborhood, although zoned I-R, is largely commercial uses.

The former cafeteria will be used as a worship center, office space, and for youth activities. Programs and services will occur every Sunday and 1 or 2 evenings per week. During these times, the neighboring businesses will typically be closed. No permanent structures will be erected during the lease term which would render the property unsuitable for a true industrial

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user. Traffic will be minimal from this small congregation and will occur during “off peak hours.” No noise will be generated by the proposed use.

The requested use necessitates the grant of a variance. Although the Applicant will occupy only a small portion of the former London Fog complex, the entire complex is made up of 29.5 acres (+/-), which exceeds the allowable use of 5 acres or less in the I-R zone for “non-industrial” uses.

Based on the above, the Board found that any noise, dust, fumes, or traffic generated by the small church will be no greater here than elsewhere in the “I-R” zone. Specifically, traffic congestion and noise would be much less than that generated by an industrial user. Therefore, the conditional use was granted. Furthermore, due to the unique conditions on this property (a cafeteria which is a small portion of a large former industrial use), a strict application of the size limitations to the proposed church would result in unnecessary hardship. Accordingly, the variance was granted.

18 August 2010
Date

Howard Kramer
Howard Kramer, Chairman