

Christopher Pegelo & Lindsay Schaefer

71 Ferndale Avenue
Guelph, ON N1E 1B6



March 1, 2025

City of Guelph – Committee of Adjustment

1 Carden Street
Guelph, ON N1H 3A1

Re: Minor Variances Application for 71 Ferndale Avenue

Dear Committee of Adjustment,

We are submitting this letter in support of our minor variance application for the construction of a detached garage on our property at 71 Ferndale Ave. The proposed garage is designed to improve the functionality, aesthetics, and overall usability of our property while aligning with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Rationale for the Variances

The requested variances pertain to height and rear yard coverage, which are necessary to accommodate a structure that meets our specific needs for storage. Our request is based on the following key considerations:

- **Improved Curb Appeal** – The proposed garage will replace the existing carport, which has been an eyesore to the overall appeal of our home. The new structure will contribute positively to the streetscape and property values.
- **Neighbourhood Consistency** – Several properties in the area feature large garages. Our proposed build remains in line with the existing neighbourhood character.
- **Height for a Vehicle Storage Lift** – Due to our multiple vehicles, a Seadoo, and an open trailer we require a specific ceiling height to accommodate the storage lift. This is a practical and efficient use of space, enabling us to store vehicles vertically.
- **Rear Yard Coverage** – Our property size and layout do not allow for the construction of a garage that meets the typical rear yard coverage requirements while still offering adequate room for parking and storage. However, the proposed detached garage would remain within the city's requirements for square footage, ensuring compliance with overall size limitations. A variance would enable us to maximize the available space for both vehicle storage and other essential functions while maintaining the property's functionality and accessibility.

Discussions with the Planning and Building Services Department

- **Height Variance** – We presented our site plan and drawings to the Planning and Building Services Department for review. The drawings outlined a height requirement of 4.67m, slightly exceeding the by-law limit of 4.0m. We received feedback suggesting a further setback to accommodate the higher structure. In response, we provided revised drawings that included a 1.2m setback while maintaining the height of 4.67m. The Planning Department supported the height variance with the revised setback.

- **Rear Yard Coverage Variance** – We presented our site plan and drawings to the Planning and Building Services Department for review. The proposed drawings outlined a rear yard coverage rate of 39%, slightly exceeding the by-law limit of 30%, with a total square footage of 748 sq ft., which is within the by-law's allowable 753 sq ft. We received feedback expressing concerns about the impact of the additional coverage on water infiltration. In response, we revised the drawings to include the removal of an existing outdoor shed, reducing the rear yard coverage to 34.5%.

To address the water infiltration concerns, we also proposed implementing rain barrels or directing the garage downspouts into the existing underground drainage system connected to the house. Additionally, we will use pavers from the detached garage to the driveway to help reduce the amount of concrete, further aiding water infiltration. In our efforts to better understand how similar concerns were handled in the area, we observed that the neighbouring property at 51 Ferndale Avenue features a detached garage with what appears to be rear yard coverage of approximately 70-75%, including surrounding concrete surfaces. We reached out to inquire how the coverage and water infiltration concerns were addressed for that property to explore potential solutions for our design, though we were informed that only details related to a publicly shared minor height variance application could be disclosed.

While the Planning Department maintains the 30% maximum rear yard coverage, we believe that our proposed 34.5% coverage, coupled with our water mitigation measures, is a minor variance that addresses the concerns raised while remaining consistent with the intent of the by-law.

We are confident that our proposed garage will be a positive addition to the neighbourhood, providing both functional and aesthetic improvements. We appreciate the Committee's time and consideration of our application, and we welcome any further discussion or site visits as needed.

Sincerely,

Christopher Pegelo & Lindsay Schaefer