

**Portland Township**  
**Ionia County**

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**Zoning Board of Appeals Application**

This application must be completed in full and approved by the Township Zoning Board of Appeals before beginning any construction, excavation or use regulated by the Portland Township Zoning Ordinance. Fee: \$250.00

**Applicant Information**

Name Sarah Harraka  
Address 8045 meadowlane Drive  
City Portland State MI Zip 48875  
Phone Numbers (517) 505-0599 ( ) ( )

**Property Owner Information** (if different from applicant)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Numbers ( ) ( ) ( )

**Proposed Request**

Reason for Zoning Board of Appeals hearing:

- Variance
- Ordinance or map interpretation
- Appeal from administrative decision
- Other authorized review

Proposed Request lot size Sec.3.15.06.(K)(1)and (3)  
Requesting variance due to lot size being  
under 30,000 sq. ft. and variance for drop off/  
pick up site area

Address of Property 8045 Meadowlane Drive  
City Portland Zip 48875  
Parcel Number 34-140-033-000-030-01 or attach legal description if number not yet assigned  
Zoning District R-1

Dear Portland Township Zoning Board,

I am writing to request a variance in lot size for the purpose of expanding my family daycare home to a group home. As you may know, I have been operating a licensed family daycare home at 8045 Meadowlane Drive for nearly 8 years. During this time, I have provided quality care for numerous children in a safe and nurturing environment.

As my daycare has grown, I have received numerous requests from parents to expand my services to include a group home. This would allow me to care for more children in a larger, more suitable setting. As it stands now, I need to increase my numbers to accommodate the families I already care for as they are expecting more children. However, I have been informed that the current lot size of my property does not meet the zoning requirements for a group home.

I understand the importance of adhering to zoning regulations, but I believe that an exception should be made in this case. I have taken measures to ensure that my property meets all safety and health requirements for a group home, including installing fire alarms and smoke detectors, providing ample outdoor play space, and ensuring adequate space for each child.

I am also requesting that the parking variance requirement be waived. According to the current zoning laws, I am required to have a certain number of parking spaces based on the number of children I will be caring for. Unfortunately, due to the layout of my property, it is not possible for us to provide the required number of parking spaces without making significant modifications to our property, which would be costly and not practical at this time. As I am increasing in the number of children I care for in the same family, my traffic flow shouldn't increase heavily. My home is located in a residential area with ample parking on the grass and in the driveway which can be used by my clients. I will also make arrangements to schedule drop-off and pick-up times with parents to avoid any parking congestion.

I am committed to providing the best possible care for children in my community, and expanding to a group home would allow me to do just that. I am confident that I can meet all the requirements for a group home and continue to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children. As you may also know there is a GREAT need in our town for daycare. I love children and would love to be able to fulfill that need for my current families and any future families.

I kindly request that you consider my application for a variance in lot size and parking to accommodate my family daycare home to become a group home. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Harraka". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Sarah Harraka

**Zoning Board of Appeals Application (page 2)**

**Present Use of the Property**

Present use Licensed child care home for up to  
-6- children.

**If you are requesting a variance, please complete the following:**

There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applying to the property in question that do not generally apply to other properties in the same zoning district because:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right similar to that possessed by other properties in the zoning district and in the vicinity because:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

That the building, structure, or land cannot yield a reasonable return if required to be used for a use allowed in the zoned district in which it is located because: NA

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*see attached*

From Page 2 of the Variance Application

Below are the applicants comments/reasons as shown below in italics for the first and second paragraphs to fill out. Paragraph 3 is not needed as that is for a use variance.

If you are requesting a variance, please complete the following:

There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applying to the property in question that do not generally apply to other properties in the same zoning district because: The exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applying to the property in question are unique and do not generally apply to other properties in the same zoning district.

*Our property is situated in an area with high demand for childcare services, and as such, expanding our services to a group childcare facility is necessary to meet the needs of the community, but especially for those families we already provide care to and who are expanding in size. However, our property is smaller in lot size compared to other properties in the same zoning district, which creates a challenge for meeting the required parking needs for a group childcare facility. Additionally, the unique layout of our property makes it difficult to reconfigure the space to meet the parking requirements without compromising the safety of the children in our care. It would also be costly and not practical at this time. Given these exceptional circumstances, we believe that the variance for lot size and parking is necessary to allow us to provide essential childcare services to the community while also ensuring the safety of the children in our care. We respectfully request that you consider our request for a variance on this basis. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.*

Variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right similar to that possessed by other properties in the zoning district and in the vicinity because:

*It will allow us to expand our childcare services and better serve our community. As a family childcare home, we have been limited in the number of children we can care for, and many families in the area are in need of group childcare services. By obtaining the variances for lot size and parking, we will be able to provide high-quality care to more children and families in our community, which is in line with the goals and objectives of the zoning district. Moreover, other properties in the vicinity have been granted similar variances, and we believe that our property should be afforded the same rights and opportunities as our neighbors. Thank you for considering our request for a variance.*

Sarah Harraka

## Zoning Board of Appeals Application (page 3)

### Site Plan

Include a site plan drawing showing the location of existing structures, any proposed location of any new construction or additions to any existing structures. Indicate the distances of any proposed construction to your lot lines, road right of way, easements, and shorelines. For new accessory structures also include the distance to the dwelling. Indicate any unusual physical features of the site or buildings.

### Affidavit

I certify and affirm that I am the property or building owner or the owner's authorized agent and that I agree to conform to applicable zoning laws of Portland Township. I also certify and affirm that this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I hereby give permission for Township representatives to visit this location. I understand that if my request is granted, other ordinance requirements may be applicable.

Signature Sarah Lauoka Date 3-30-23

### Administrative Use

Application Received - Date 4-5-23

Fee paid \$250 PFCU #1350 Date 4-5-23

Date of Hearing 5-15-23 Date Published 4-28-23 Date 300' Notices Sent 4-28-23

Date Posted at Hall 4-28-23

Application Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Application Denied \_\_\_\_\_

Decision and Conditions \_\_\_\_\_

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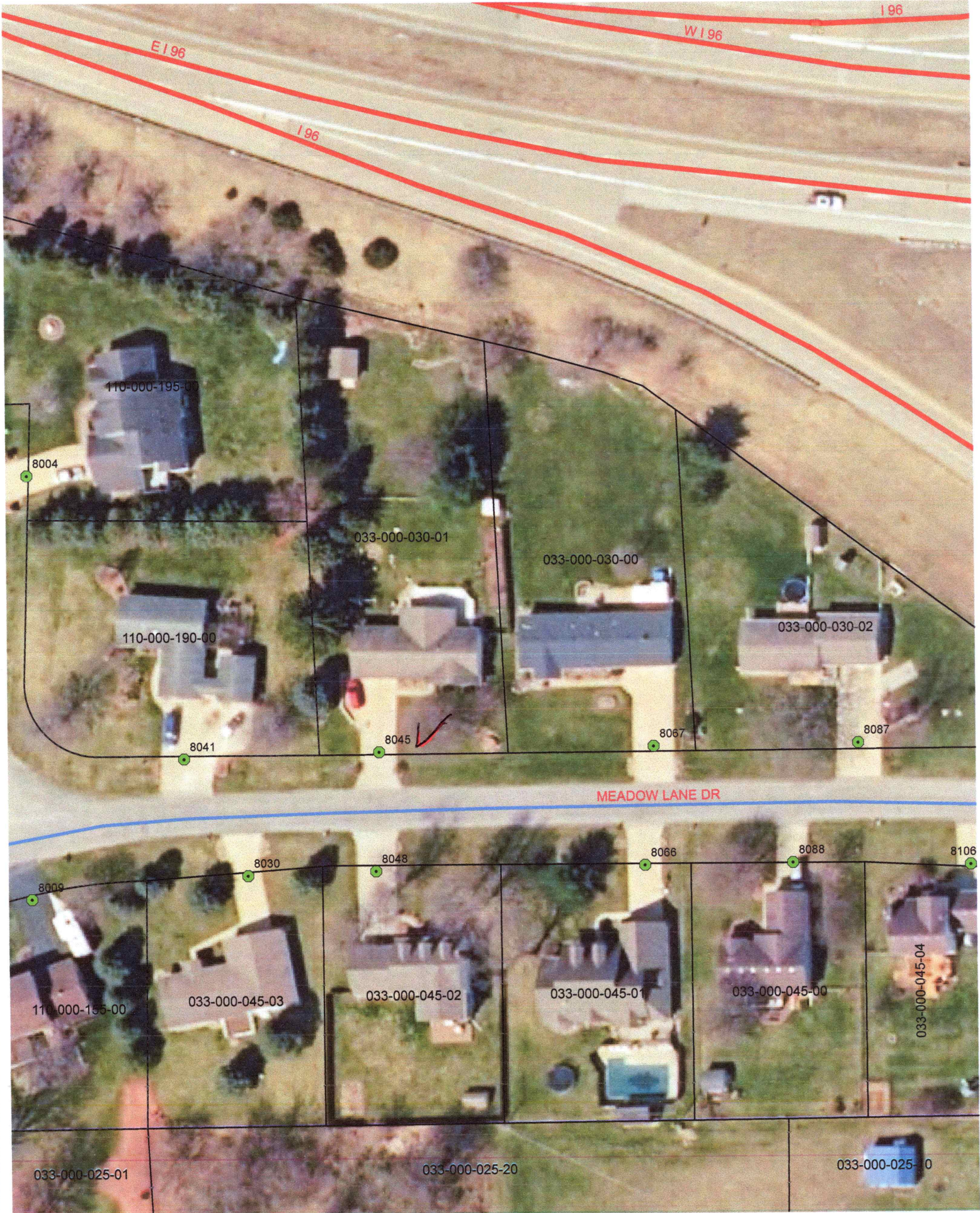
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