

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for taking the time to consider our application for a variance. When I purchased our home on 146 Clark Street in 2021, I was a single mom with 3 children, and the home fit our needs perfectly. My girls share a room, while me and my son have rooms of our own. Fast forward to 2023 and our little family of 4 is now a family of 7! My partner and his son have moved in, and we welcomed a new baby last January. We have run out of space for everyone and have looked at several different avenues to fix this issue. Unfortunately, we found out that cannot turn our basement into livable space due to it being over 100 years old. It is more of a damp cellar with exposed crawl space. We were quoted a minimum of \$100,000 to try and make some of that space usable, but that is not within our budget. We also looked at adding an addition onto the back of the home. This also is not an option due to the very small size of our backyard. Even if we just added one small room, our backyard would be gone, and we would be a foot or two away from the neighbor's garage. This led us to our final option, building off the front of our home. In contrast to our backyard, our front yard is extremely spacious. There is plenty of room to build extra living space, as well as a bedroom for my partner's son and the new baby to share. This is where the variance comes in. The village of Cottage Grove has a setback of 25 feet from lot line to the structure. However, our home is in the much older part of the village, and we are one of the only homes on the block that adheres to the setback guideline (plus some!). Most of the homes on Clark Street, as well as a few around the block, sit much closer to the lot line than 25 feet. There is even one home that sits within inches of the street. Building off the front of our home could also help create uniformity on our block, as we would be in line with the other homes. We are asking you to please allow us to build off the front of our home in order to have room for our family.

Thank you,

Courtney Miller