



PLANNING AND ZONING
Cerro Gordo County Courthouse

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Variance Staff Report
Board of Adjustment
April 28, 2026

Case No.: 25-22

Hearing Date: April 28, 2026

Request: A variance request to raise-repair footings/foundation to create basement related to the west side yard and the front of the lot.

Public Hearing Date: April 28, 2026

Case No.: 25-22

Applicant:

Ron Loudenburg, Meints Construction
801 6th Ave S
Clear Lake, IA 50428

Owner:

Aldridge Revocable Trust
6610 NW 84th Circle
Johnston, IA 50131

Property Address: 4621 Wesley Dr, Clear Lake, IA 50428

Brief Legal Description: Lot 193, CLMC, Clear Lake Township

Zoning: R-3 Single Family Residential District

Background

The existing dwelling with attached 3-season porch is 28'x34' in size and was constructed in 1948. According to the contractor, the foundation is failing. Repairing the foundation requires that the house be lifted to remove the existing foundation and to dig the proper depth for footings and foundation. While the house is lifted, they would like to add a basement under the dwelling as there is currently only a crawl space. The peak height of the dwelling would change from 18' to 23'. The 3-season porch is located in the southeast corner of the dwelling. According to the plans, the interior layout of the dwelling will change. The 3-season porch located at the back of the house will become a bedroom. A 10'x10' covered deck has been proposed on the rear of the dwelling. The A-frame roof which slopes to the east to cover the existing 3-season porch will be squared up to accommodate a bunk room and additional headroom. The footprint will remain 28'x34' in size.

Variance Request

Structure	Request(s)	Requirement(s)
1½ story dwelling	1.5-foot west side yard setback	6-foot side yard setback required in the R-3 District
1½ story dwelling	12.6-foot front yard avg setback required	13.7'-foot front yard avg setback required

Variance Request

1. Request a 1.5’ west side yard setback – 6’ is required.
2. Request a 12.6’ front yard setback – 13.7’ front yard average is required.

Findings of Fact

1. Aldridge Revocable Trust is the owner of the property.
2. Ron Loudenburg with Meints Construction is the contractor and applicant.
3. The property is zoned R-3 Single Family Residential.
4. The existing house is 1.5’ from the west side lot line; 6’ is required.
5. The existing house is 12.6’ from the front lot line; 13.7’ front yard average is required.
6. The application was filed on February 27, 2026.

ANALYSIS

The requested variance involves an area, dimensional, or other numerical limit (e.g., setbacks, height, lot size, parking, signage) and must meet the following five criteria as allowed under Iowa Code Chapter 335.15 (4). The Board of Adjustment is provided the power to grant a variance under Section 24.4(A)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance. In its review, the Board may attach certain conditions to any variance granted in order to observe the spirit of the Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan and mitigate any potential impacts that may directly result from the requested variance.

Discussion of Standards of Review per Iowa Code Section 335.15(4)

1. ***Public interest: Granting the variance is not contrary to the public interest.***

Granting the variance does not appear on its face to be contrary to the public interest. A single-family dwelling with attached 3-season porch has existed on this property for many years and the proposed use remains residential in nature. The existing dwelling is 12.6’ from the front lot line at its closest point and 1.5’ from the west side lot line at its closest point. Adding a full basement, raising the dwelling 5 feet and squaring up the roofline will remain within the 28’x34’ footprint. The owner has received approval from the Bell Harbor Homeowners Association. The Board could find that this standard is met.

2. ***Special conditions – practical difficulties: Owing to special conditions of the property, a literal enforcement would cause “practical difficulties” for the property owner trying to make a beneficial use of the property allowed by the Zoning Ordinance.***

The lot is relatively narrow, measuring approximately 40 feet along Wesley Drive and 46 feet along Southshore Drive. The dwelling is not situated parallel to the lot lines and is already located closer to the front and west lot lines than current regulations allow. The applicant states that the foundation is failing and must be replaced, which requires lifting the structure and installing new footings and foundation walls. The proposed plans also include a full basement in place of the crawl space, changing the 3-season room to a bedroom, adding a rear covered deck, a modified roofline, and an increase in height from 18 feet to 23 feet. While the existing placement of the dwelling and lot configuration are factors for the Board to consider, the Board may also consider whether lifting the dwelling creates an opportunity to reposition it on the lot to reduce or eliminate the current setback deficiencies. If the structure can reasonably be reset in a compliant location, or in a location that substantially reduces the non-conforming setbacks, that circumstance weighs against a finding that literal enforcement of the ordinance creates a practical difficulty. The Board may further consider whether portions of the proposal, including the revised roofline, and increased height, go beyond what is necessary to address the failing foundation and instead reflect an expansion or redesign that does not itself justify variance relief.

3. Spirit observed – substantial justice done: The spirit of the Ordinance is observed, and substantial justice is done by granting the variance.

The dwelling presently is not in conformance with the front and west side setback areas. The proposed work would largely occur within the existing 28-foot by 34-foot footprint of the dwelling, although the structure would become taller and the design would be altered. The Board should consider whether allowing continued use of the existing footprint would be consistent with substantial justice.

4. Unique and not self-created: The difficulties are unique to the property and not self-created (e.g., lot shape, topography, prior lawful platting).

The dwelling was in its current location when the present owners acquired the property in 2021. The existing setback issues were not created by the current owners. The Board may consider whether the lot dimensions, the angle of the dwelling on the lot, and the location of the existing structure create circumstances unique to this parcel. At the same time, the Board may also consider whether some elements of the current proposal such as locating the new footings and basement in the same location are design choices rather than practical difficulties related to the property itself.

5. Neighborhood character protected: The variance will not significantly alter the essential character of the surrounding neighborhood.

A dwelling already exists on the property, and the property will remain residential. The Board may consider that maintaining the existing footprint tends to preserve the established development pattern along Wesley Drive. The Board may also consider whether the increased height, revised roofline, and other exterior changes could affect the character of the immediate area more than a simple foundation replacement would.

Staff Conclusions

This request arises from the existing placement of the dwelling on a narrow lot and the stated need to replace a failing foundation. The application proposes keeping the main dwelling footprint at 28 feet by 34 feet while also adding a basement, increasing the height of the structure, revising the roofline, and adding a covered rear deck.

Because the dwelling is proposed to be lifted from its foundation, the Board may find that this project presents an opportunity to bring the structure into greater compliance with current setback requirements. If repositioning is reasonably feasible, the circumstances may not rise to the level of a practical difficulty sufficient to justify a variance.

Whether the statutory criteria are met remains a determination for the Board based on the evidence presented at hearing.

BOARD DECISION

The Board of Adjustment may consider the following alternatives:

Alternatives

1. Grant the requested variances subject to any conditions as deemed necessary by the Board.
2. Grant relief less or different from the requested variance by modifying the requested variances.
3. Deny the variances.

The following motions are provided for the Board's consideration:

Provided motion of approval:

- I move to adopt the staff report as the Board's findings and to approve the variances as requested by Meints Construction, on behalf of the Aldridge Revocable Trust, subject to the following conditions:
 1. All construction shall comply with the Site Plan submitted on February 19, 2026.
 2. No construction shall begin until a Zoning Permit has been issued by the Planning and Zoning Office.

Provided Alternate Action:

- I move to adopt the staff report as the Board's findings and to approve the variances with the following changes (list changes).
 1. No construction shall begin until a Zoning Permit has been issued by the Planning and Zoning Office.

Provided motion of denial:

- I move to adopt the staff report as the Board's findings and to deny the variances as requested by Meints Construction, on behalf of the Aldridge Revocable Trust for the following reasons:

The request does not meet the criteria in Iowa Code Chapter 335.15.
[STATE ANY OTHER REASONS FOR DENIAL]

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: Figures 1-5 photos
- Exhibit 2: Variance Application dated February 27, 2026
- Exhibit 3: 2021 Plat of Survey
- Exhibit 4: House plans
- Exhibit 5: Parcel Highlight

Figure 1
Front of dwelling from Wesley Drive



Figure 2
Looking at 3-season porch located in SE corner of dwelling



Figure 3
Rear of dwelling where 10'x10' covered deck will be located west of the 3-season porch



Figure 4
Looking at east side of 3-season porch and A-frame roofline from Wesley Dr



Figure 5
Looking along west side lot line from Wesley Dr and 1.5' side yard setback



VARIANCE APPEAL

APPLICATION

Date Filed 2-27-26

Date Set for Hearing 4-28-26

Case Number: 25-22

Applicant Name: Roy Loudenburg Phone: 641-420-4747 E-Mail: _____
Meints Const. Builders

Mailing Address: _____ ron@meintsconstruction.com

Property Owner Name: Aldridge Revocable Phone: 515-986-3205 E-Mail: _____

Property Owner Address: 6610 NW 84th CIR Johnston, IA 50131

Property Description (Not to be used on legal documents): Parcel # 05224160020 Township Clear Lake

Property Address: 7621 Wesley Zoning: R-3

Brief Legal Description:
Lot 193 Methodist Camp

Project Description

Decision Date: _____

Lot 193 Methodist Camp

Variance(s) Requested (As cited on results from denied Zoning Permit Application)

The existing house is 1.5' from the west side lot line @ its closest point. A 6' side yard setback is required in R-3 Dist. Existing house is 12'-6" from front lot line @ its closest point. A 13.7' front yard setback is required per average of
Criteria Justifying Variance under Standards for Review (You may add more details in the Additional Information) for yard setback within 200'.

There are signs of existing foundation failing. The repair requires that the structure be lifted to remove existing foundation & dig proper depth for footings & foundations & in the process create safe space in newly built basement.

I am the Owner Contract Purchaser Other (Explain) General Contractor
representing owner of the property affected.

I, the applicant, being duly sworn, depose and say that I am the owner, or that I am authorized and empowered to make affidavit for the owner, who makes the accompanying application; that the application and plan are true and contain a correct description of the proposed building, lot, work, and use to which the structure is to be placed if a variance is granted. The Planning & Zoning staff is also given permission to enter the above property in reviewing this Application.

Applicant Signature Roy Loudenburg

Date 2-27-26

RETRACEMENT PLAT OF SURVEY

Doc. #: 2021-4568

Type: ISUR Pages: 2 06/16/2021 09:54 AM

R: \$10.00 - Tf: \$0.00 - M: \$1.00 - Tc: \$1 - N: \$0
Pymt: Check

AnnMarie Legler, Cerro Gordo County Recorder



INDEX LEGEND

LOCATION: LOT 193 CLEAR LAKE METHODIST CAMP,
CERRO GORDO COUNTY, IOWA

REQUESTED BY: DERRICK D. ALDRIDGE

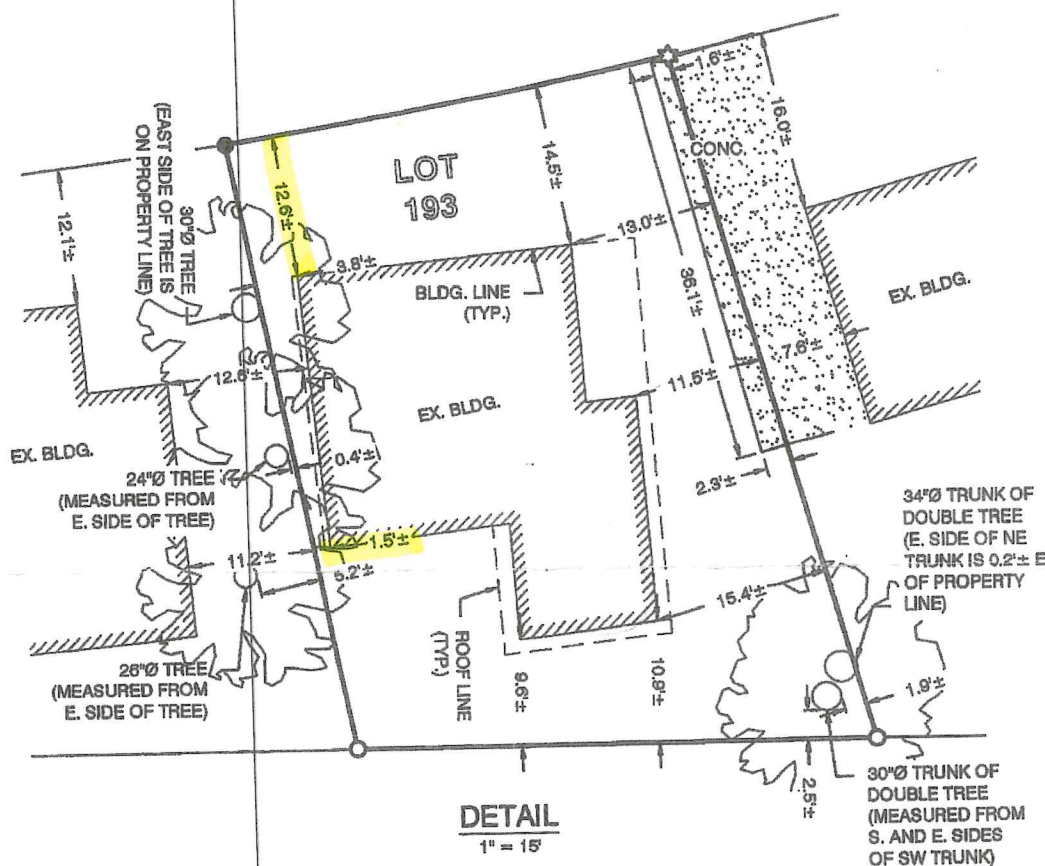
PROPRIETORS: DERRICK D. AND MARSHA A. ALDRIDGE

SURVEYOR: JOSEPH A. SNETHEN, PLS #23133

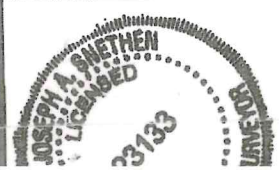
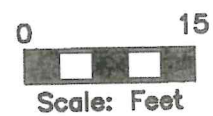
PREPARED BY & RETURN TO: CLAPSADDLE-GARBER ASSOCIATES, INC.
511 BANK ST., WEBSTER CITY, IA. 50595
PH: 515-832-1876 FAX: 515-832-1932
WWW.CGACONSULTANTS.COM

1200 ck (env)

and



DETAIL
1" = 15'



I hereby certify that this land surveying document was prepared and the related survey work was performed by me or under my direct personal supervision and that I am a duly licensed Professional Land Surveyor under the laws of the State of Iowa.

Joseph A. Snethen

- Monument Symbols are Orientated to the North
- T-Bar w/ Stainless Steel Washer (#5543)
 - ⊙ T-Bar w/ illegible Stainless Steel Washer
 - T-Bar in 1" I.D. Iron Pipe
 - ◆ T-Bar w/ Stainless Steel Washer (#5543) in 1" O.D. Iron Pipe
 - ⊠ 1" O.D. Iron Pipe, 0.6' deep.
 - ⊞ T-Bar w/ Stainless Steel Washer (#13644) in PCC.
 - ⊞ 1/2" Iron Rod in PCC

Found

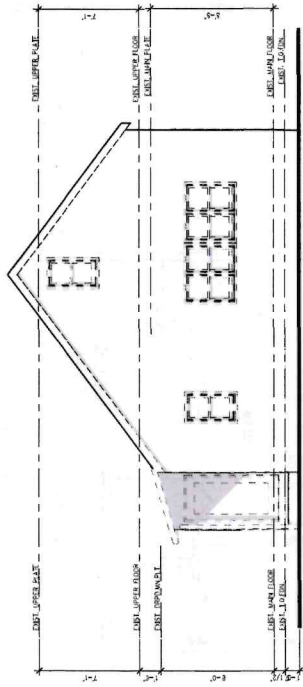
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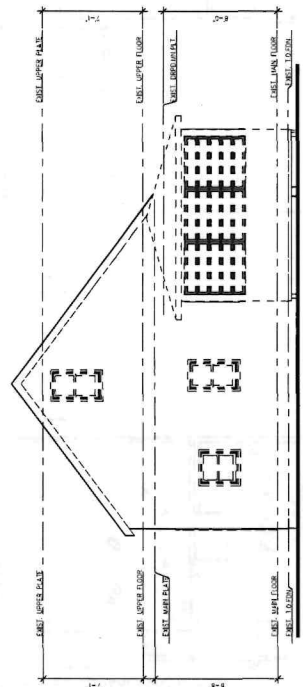
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 303.733.1111

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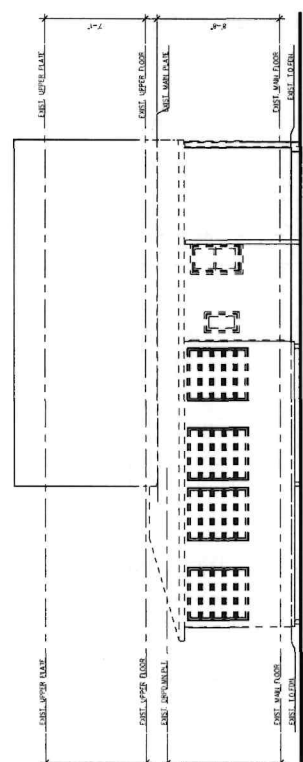
PROJECT PHASE: PERMIT SET



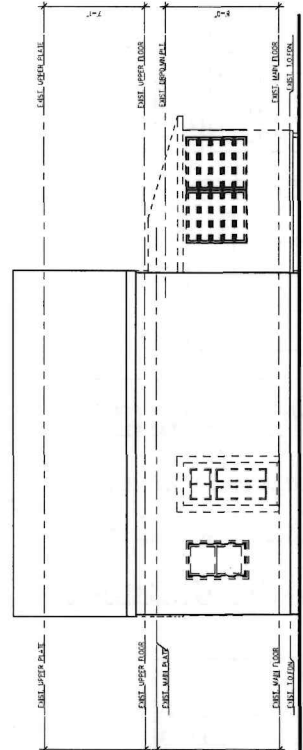
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 1/4" = 1'-0"
 EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION



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 EXISTING REAR ELEVATION



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 EXISTING LEFT ELEVATION



4
 1/4" = 1'-0"
 EXISTING RIGHT ELEVATION

ALDRIDGE LAKEHOUSE
 PROJECT ADDRESS

BUILDER: [Blank]
 PROJECT NO.: [Blank]
 ISSUE DATE: 01.13.22
 SHEET NAME: EXISTING ELEVATIONS
 SHEET NO.: A2.1

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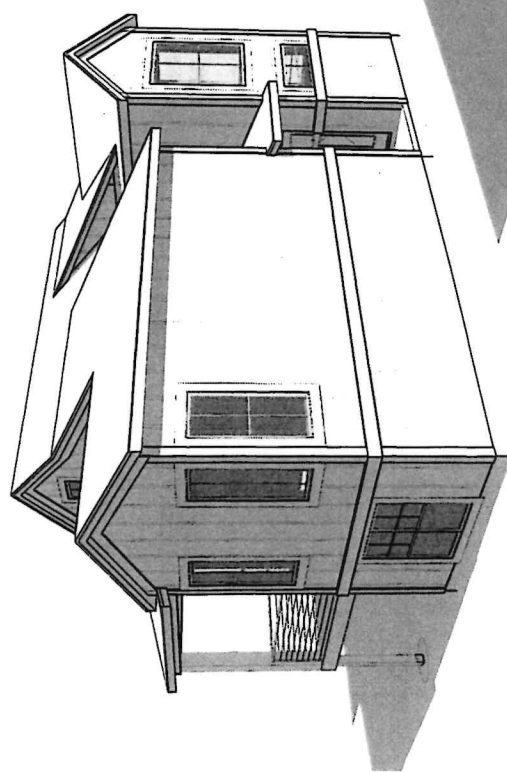
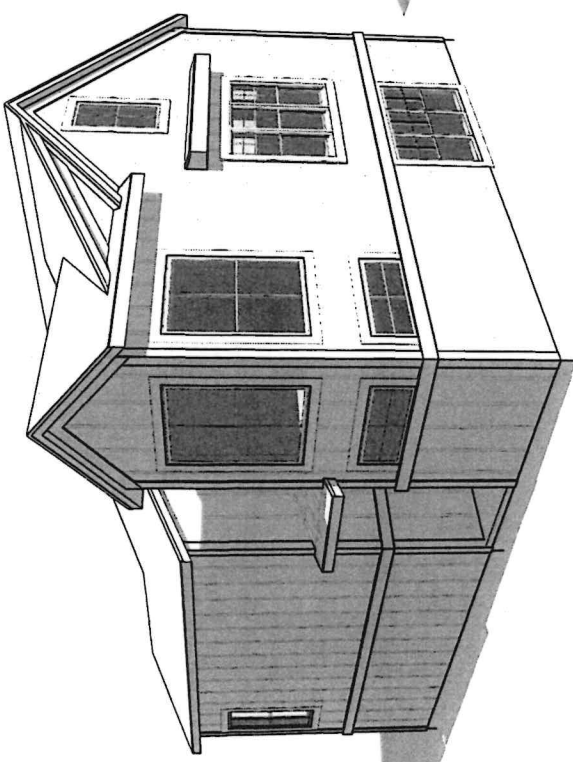
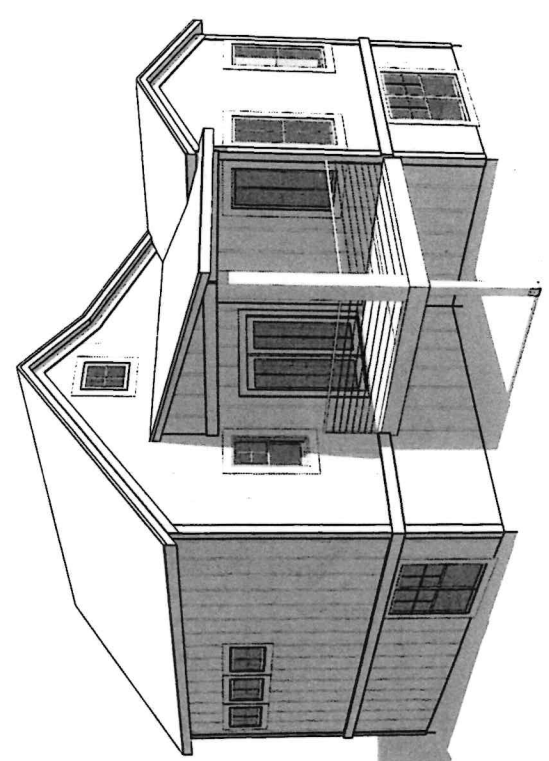
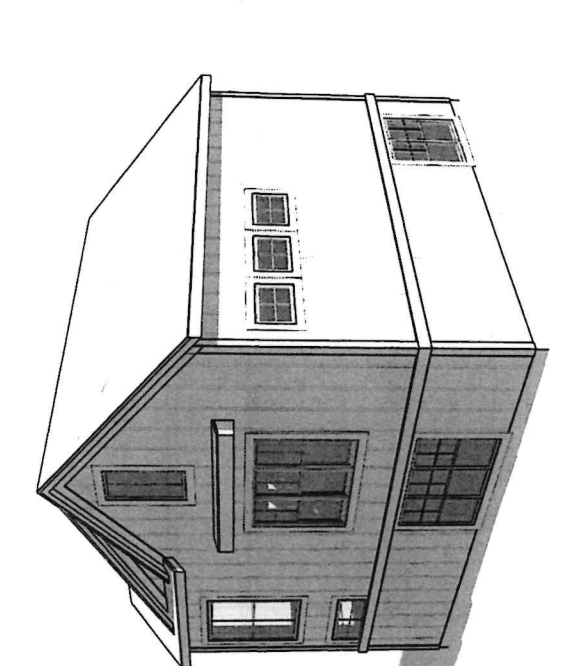
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PROJECT PHASE: PERMIT SET

TYPICAL NOTES:

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SOUTHSHORE DR

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