



CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS  
ZONING HEARING EXAMINER  
NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

8801 Horizon Partners LLC requests a variance of 33 ft to the 39 ft maximum height for Lot 1, IHS Acquisition #120, located at 8801 Horizon Blvd NE, zoned NR-LM [Section 14-16-3-4(J)(3)(b)(2)]

Special Exception No:..... **VA-2019-00167**  
Project No: ..... **Project# 2019-002385**  
Hearing Date: ..... 06-19-19  
Closing of Public Record: ..... 06-19-19  
Date of Decision: ..... 07-03-19

On the 18th day of June, 2019, Jim Strozier, Consensus Planning, agent for property owner 8801 Horizon Partners, LLC (by and through its authorized agent, “Applicant”) appeared before the Zoning Hearing Examiner (“ZHE”) requesting a variance of 33 ft to the 39 ft maximum height (“Application”) upon the real property located at 8801 Horizon Blvd NE (“Subject Property”). Below are the ZHE’s findings of fact and decision:

FINDINGS:

1. Applicant is requesting a variance of 33 ft to the 39 ft maximum height.
2. The subject property is currently zoned NR-LM.
3. Applicant has authority to pursue this Application.
4. The City of Albuquerque Integrated Development Ordinance, Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a) (Variance-Review and Decision Criteria) reads: “... an application for a Variance-ZHE shall be approved if it meets all of the following criteria:
  - (1) *There are special circumstances applicable to the subject property that are not self-imposed and that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity such as size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, or physical characteristics created by natural forces or government action for which no compensation was paid. Such special circumstances of the property either create an extraordinary hardship in the form of a substantial and unjustified limitation on the reasonable use or return on the property, or practical difficulties result from strict compliance with the minimum standards.*
  - (2) *The Variance will not be materially contrary to the public safety, health, or welfare.*
  - (3) *The Variance does not cause significant material adverse impacts on surrounding properties or infrastructure improvements in the vicinity.*
  - (4) *The Variance will not materially undermine the intent and purpose of the IDO or the applicable zone district.*
  - (5) *The Variance approved is the minimum necessary to avoid extraordinary hardship or practical difficulties.*”
5. The Applicant bears the burden of ensuring there is evidence in the record supporting a finding that the above criteria are met under Section 14-16-6-4(F)(2).

6. Applicant appeared at the ZHE hearing on this matter and gave evidence in support of the Application.
7. Applicant testified at the hearing that the proper “Notice of Hearing” signage was posted for the required time period as required by Section 14-16-6-4(K)(3).
8. Applicant testified at the hearing that all property owners and neighborhood association entitled to notice were notified of the Application.
9. Applicant has met its burden of providing evidence that establishes that there are special circumstances applicable to the Subject Property that are not self-imposed and that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity such as size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, or physical characteristics created by natural forces or government action for which no compensation was paid, as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(1). Specifically, a prior approval, in place prior to adoption of the IDO, allowed for construction of the existing building. Adoption of the IDO made this a nonconforming structure, and such nonconformance applies uniquely to the Subject Property. As such, the special circumstances were not self-imposed and do not apply generally to other property in the same zone and vicinity. Applicant seeks the requested variance to bring the building out of non-conforming status, and allow it to continue to be used, refinanced, sold, or changed as it could under the previous development standards that allowed a 72-foot tall building to be built.. No evidence was submitted to the contrary.
10. Applicant has met its burden of providing evidence that establishes that the variance will not be contrary to the public safety, health and welfare of the community as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(2). Specifically, Applicant provided evidence that there would be no negative impact to the public safety, health and welfare of the community, and that rather the requested Variance would allow the Subject Property to support various goals of the City in support of economic development that in turn support the public welfare. The Variance request will allow for indefinite, continued use of a high-quality office building that provides a significant amount of space for job creation and continued economic growth opportunities within the City of Albuquerque. No evidence was submitted to the contrary.
11. Applicant has met its burden of providing evidence that establishes that the variance will not cause significant adverse material impacts on surrounding properties or infrastructure improvements in the vicinity as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(3). Specifically, Applicant provided evidence that there would be no adverse material impact. No evidence was submitted to the contrary.
12. Applicant has met its burden of providing evidence that establishes that the variance will not materially undermine the intent and purpose of the IDO or applicable zone district as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(4). Specifically, Applicant provided testimony that there would be no adverse material impact and that the continued use of the Subject Property as built would actually further the intent and purpose of the IDO and the applicable zone district. No evidence was submitted to the contrary.
13. Applicant has met its burden of providing evidence that establishes that the variance approved is the minimum necessary to avoid extraordinary hardship or practical difficulties as required by Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a)(5). Specifically, Applicant provided testimony and written evidence that the existing building is 72 feet tall and the requested variance would allow only up to a 72-foot building. No evidence was submitted to the contrary.
14. The City Traffic Engineering Division stated no objection.
15. The criteria within Section 14-16-6-6(N)(3)(a) of the IDO are satisfied.

DECISION:

APPROVAL of a variance of 5 ft to the minimum 10 ft street side yard setback.

CONDITIONS:

Applicant and the Subject Property must comply with all applicable IDO requirements and conditions of the prior approval.

APPEAL:

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so by July 18, 2019 pursuant to Section 14-16-6-4(U), of the Integrated Development Ordinance, you must demonstrate that you have legal standing to file an appeal as defined.

Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the City must be complied with, even after approval of a special exception is secured. This decision does not constitute approval of plans for a building permit. If your application is approved, bring this decision with you when you apply for any related building permit or occupation tax number. Approval of a conditional use or a variance application is void after one year from date of approval if the rights and privileges are granted, thereby have not been executed or utilized.



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Robert L. Lucero, Jr., Esq.  
Zoning Hearing Examiner

cc: Zoning Enforcement  
ZHE File  
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