



Staff Report

Planning & Building Services – Planning Division

Report To: Committee of Adjustment
Meeting Date: August 20, 2025
Report Number: PBS.25.057
Title: Recommendation Report – Minor Variance Application A15-2025 –
595587 4th Line (Knowles)
Prepared by: Manuel Rivera, Planner I

A. Recommendations

THAT the Committee of Adjustment receive Staff Report PBS.25.057, entitled “Recommendation Report – Minor Variance A15-2025”;

AND THAT the Committee of Adjustment GRANT Application for Minor Variance A15 - 2025 in order to permit the construction of a 133.77 m² additional residential unit with a maximum height of 5.42 m and located a maximum distance of 74.36 m from the main dwelling, subject to the following conditions:

1. Confirmation from Grey Sauble Conservation Authority that a permit can be obtained (if required);
2. That the site development be constructed in a manner substantially in accordance with the submitted site plan; and
3. That this variance to the Zoning By-law is for the purpose of obtaining a building permit and is only valid for a period of two (2) years from the date of decision. Should a building permit not be issued by the Town within two years, the variance shall expire on August 20, 2027.

B. Background

The subject lands are located at 595584 4th Line, adjacent to open space to the north, development and hazard lands to the east, and rural uses to the south and west. The property contains a small portion within the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority’s regulated area, located outside the proposed development site; however, a permit may still be required from their office. The lands are approximately 679,872 m² (168 acres) in size, with vegetation throughout the site and 611 m of frontage on 4th Line. The property features various gentle slopes across the lands.

These lands contain an existing 181.74 m², two-storey dwelling, three (3) existing accessory buildings comprised of:

1. Two (2) two-storey accessory farm buildings with areas of 237.21 m² and 457.66 m², and
2. One (1) single-storey accessory frame building with an area of 57.49 m².

The property also contains an existing swimming pool and gravel driveway. The site is privately serviced for water and wastewater.

In 2022, an application (A48-2022) was brought forward to the Committee of Adjustment. The request was for minor variances to the Accessory Apartment Dwelling provisions in Zoning By-law 2018-65. The following variances were requested:

1. To permit a maximum height of 9.11 m for an accessory apartment dwelling, whereas a maximum of 4.5 m is permitted; and
2. To permit an accessory apartment dwelling to be located a maximum of 56 m from the main building, whereas a maximum of 50 m is permitted.

The purpose of this application was to permit the conversion of a portion of an existing barn into an accessory apartment dwelling unit. Planning Staff recommended approval, and the Committee granted approval for the requested variances. However, the owner did not choose to proceed beyond the minor variance process.

The owner now wishes to construct a new 133.77 m² detached Additional Residential Unit (ARU) with covered porches on the subject lands. Due to the increased permitted maximum height and greater setback distance from the main building, the following variances are now requested:

1. To increase the maximum permitted height from 5.0 m to 5.42 m; and
2. To permit the building to be located 74.36 m from the main building, whereas a maximum distance of 50.0 m is permitted.

C. Analysis

Pursuant to Section 45(1) of the Planning Act, the Committee of Adjustment is authorized to grant minor variances to by-laws enacted by the Town which are established to implement the Official Plan. Staff have reviewed the proposal against the relevant planning documents, including the four tests of a minor variance, as outlined in the following section.

Does the proposal maintain the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan?

The subject lands are designated Rural (RU) in the 2016 Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan. Section B4.4 outlines the overall objectives of the RU designation, which include protecting the rural characteristics that contribute to the open space character associated with the Town (B4.4.1). Among the permitted uses in the RU designation are farm residences (B4.4.3 b)), along with accessory buildings and/or structures. The property is currently being used for residential purposes only, with no active farming operations. The proposed location of the detached ARU does not appear to disrupt the open space character of the RU designation.

Planning Staff are therefore satisfied that the proposal maintains the general intent and purpose of the Official Plan.

Does the proposal maintain the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law?

The subject lands are zoned Rural (RU) in the Town of The Blue Mountains Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2018-65. Permitted uses in the RU zone include an Additional Residential Unit (ARU), which must comply with Section 4.1 Additional Residential Unit provisions.

Section 4.1 b) states that the permitted maximum height for an ARU is 5.0 m, except where the ARU is located above another accessory use, in which case a maximum of 8.0 m is permitted. The intent of this provision is to ensure that a detached ARU remains subordinate to the main building. The proposed height of 5.42 m (measured from finished grade to the midpoint between the eaves and ridge of the roof) represents a 0.42 m increase. The main dwelling has a height of 5.8 m, meaning the ARU will remain secondary in height to the main building and does not appear to detract from the rural open landscape or the existing building cluster on the property.

Section 4.1 d) requires that the ARU be located within 50 m of the main building. The intent is to keep ARUs in close proximity to the primary dwelling and within the existing building cluster. The proposed ARU will be 74.36 m from the main building, increasing the setback by 24.36 m, but remains situated within the established building cluster alongside the existing accessory buildings and does not extend further out onto the property.

Planning Staff are satisfied that the proposal maintains the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law.

Is the proposal Minor in nature?

A variance may be considered “minor” when the scale of the request is modest and the relief will not result in any significant adverse impacts on adjacent properties or the surrounding area. The proposed ARU will be located on a vacant portion of the property within the building envelope, and its construction will not require removal of existing mature vegetation. The remaining vegetation will provide natural screening from both the road and neighbouring properties. Additionally, the ARU will use the existing entrance and incorporate architectural features consistent with other structures on the property. The proposed ARU complies with all other applicable zoning provisions.

Planning Staff are satisfied that this proposal is minor in nature.

Planning Staff are satisfied that the proposal is desirable for the development and use of the lands. The proposed ARU will support the community's goals of addressing the housing shortage, increasing housing affordability and accessibility, and promoting sustainable development.

Based on the above comments, Planning Staff is satisfied that the proposal can meet all four tests for minor variance.

D. Attached

1. Attachment 1

Respectfully submitted,

Manuel Rivera
Planner I

For more information, please contact:

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	PBS.25.057 Recommendation Report - Minor Variance Application A15-2025 - 595587 4th Line (Knowles).docx
Attachments:	- A15 - 2025 Draft Decision.docx
Final Approval Date:	Aug 14, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Shawn Postma - Aug 14, 2025 - 7:24 PM



**Town of The Blue Mountains
Committee of Adjustment
Decision**

In the matter of application for File No. **A15 - 2025** to consider a variance to the Town of The Blue Mountains Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2018-65, as amended.

Date of Hearing: August 20, 2025

Property Location: 595584 4th Line

Owner/ Applicant: Knowles

Purpose of Application:

The effect of this application is to consider a request for the construction of a 133.77 m² additional residential unit that is 5.42 m tall and 74.36 m away from the main building. A minor variance from Section 4.1.3(b) and (d) of the Zoning By-law:

1. To increase the maximum permitted height from 5.0 m to 5.42 m; and
2. To permit the building to be located 74.36 m from the main building, whereas a maximum distance of 50.0 m is permitted.

DECISION:

THAT the Committee of Adjustment GRANT Application for Minor Variance **A15 - 2025** in order to permit the construction of a 133.77 m² additional residential unit with a maximum height of 5.42 m and located a maximum distance of 74.36 m from the main building.

Conditions and Reasons For Decision:

See Attached Schedule "A"

Robert B. Waind

Jim Oliver
Chairman

Michael Martin

Jan Pratt

Duncan McKinlay
Vice Chairman

Date of Decision: August 20, 2025

The last date for filing an appeal to the decision is September 9, 2025

CERTIFICATION

Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P13, Sec 45(10)

I, Carrie Fairley, Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of The Blue Mountains Committee of Adjustment, certify that the above is a true copy of the decision of the committee with respect to the application recorded therein.

Carrie Fairley, Secretary-Treasurer

Town of The Blue Mountains Committee of Adjustment

32 Mill Street, Thornbury, Ont., N0H 2P0

Dated: August 20, 2025



Town of The Blue Mountains
 Committee of Adjustment
 Decision

- Schedule A -

CONDITIONS:

1. Confirmation from Grey Sauble Conservation Authority that a permit can be obtained (if required);
2. That the site development be constructed in a manner substantially in accordance with the submitted site plan; and
3. That this variance to the Zoning By-law is for the purpose of obtaining a building permit and is only valid for a period of two (2) years from the date of decision. Should a building permit not be issued by the Town within two years, the variance shall expire on August 20, 2027.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The Committee has reviewed the request as it relates to the four tests for minor variance of S.45. (1) of the Planning Act, as noted in the Planning and Development Services Staff Report PBS.25.057.

The Committee received written and/or oral submissions before and/or during the hearing and have taken these submissions into consideration when making the decision.

APPLICANT'S SITE PLAN:

