

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council Members
Douglas Faseler, City Manager

From: Bruce Allen, Golf Course General Manager

Through: Rick Cortes, Assistant City Manager

Subject: Request for Variance

Date: December 18, 2018

Last November, city staff outlined for Council plans for Starcke Park Golf Course, highlighting the most pressing need as the renovation of the Golf Pro Shop. Over the past year, City staff has been working with TSG Architects on developing a schematic plan that addresses those needs. The schematic plans are complete and staff is ready to award TSG Architects the design contract to develop detail plans and specifications for this proposed project. However, since the Pro Shop is located in the floodway, the design and construction phases of the project is contingent upon the City Council granting a variance from FEMA rules. FEMA rules state that the cost of a remodeling project undertaken on a structure in a flood plain or floodway cannot exceed 50% of the value of the structure. The Pro Shop is valued at approximately \$450,000 with project costs estimated at \$787,000; exceeding the 50% rule. Fortunately, under certain conditions, FEMA allows exemptions from this rule, such as the building scheduled for renovation designated as a historic structure. Staff applied for this designation through both the Historic Design Review Committee and City Council. Council approved the historic designation; staff is now requesting a variance from FEMA rules in order to begin the project.

The City of Seguin has three prerequisites for granting variances in a floodway. They are as follows:

1. Variances shall only be issued upon a determination that the variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief.

We believe the variance requested is the minimal amount necessary for the building to continue to function as a Pro Shop. The roofing, mechanical, and electrical systems are all in need of repair. The interior modifications will be slight, have no effect on the historic nature of the building, and the project will have no effect on flood water levels.

2. Variances shall only be issued upon, (i) showing a good and sufficient cause; (ii) a determination that failure to grant the variance would result in exceptional hardship to the applicant, and (iii) a determination that the granting of a variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, create nuisances, cause fraud on or victimization of the public, or conflict with existing local laws or ordinances.

(i) We believe we have good cause to request a variance. The Pro Shop is in need of significant repair at this time. Without these repairs, the long-term future of the Pro Shop is in doubt. If the

Pro Shop were to close, the community would lose a significant part of its history. Since Starcke Park Golf Course, opening in 1938, the Pro Shop have been an integral part of Seguin's history. In addition to the countless hours of entertainment, the Golf Course and Pro Shop has also been instrumental in bringing our community together. When it opened in 1938, Seguin was a segregated city. However, in 1955, thanks to the efforts of Clarence Little and Mayor Max Starcke, the Golf Course and Pro Shop became one of the first integrated golf courses in the south. Without this variance, some of that history will be lost.

To preserve this structure, we will need to upgrade the mechanical and roofing components of the building. The HVAC system is past its useful age. The electrical system is antiquated and needs to be brought up to code. Finally, the roofing is in need of major repair. The original roof has several major leaks and the roof over the 1978 addition needs to be removed and replaced. In short, we need this variance to insure the future of this historic building, provide our employees a safe working environment, and ultimately provide our golfers with a pleasant experience when they're in the Pro Shop.

(ii) A failure to grant this request would result in exceptional hardship for the golf course. As mentioned in section (i) without this variance the condition of the Pro Shop will continue to deteriorate. It is conceivable that roofing and mechanical problems could force the closing of the Pro Shop due to health (mold) or safety concerns. If that were to occur, we would still require a variance because the cost of replacing the roof and mechanical systems exceeds the 50% threshold imposed by FEMA. Undertaking such a project on an emergency basis would undoubtedly be more expensive and disruptive to business. If the Pro Shop were to be closed for safety or health issues and a variance could not be obtained, the City would have no choice but to close the course until a suitable facility could be built. Obtaining a variance at this time and repairing the Pro Shop would spare the City from having to take such drastic measures.

(iii) This variance will not increase flood plain heights. We will not be adding any additional square footage to the Pro Shop, so there will be no effect on flood levels. The current HVAC system is not secured to the building. The new system will be attached to the roof thereby reducing the potential for the system to be swept away as debris. Additionally, the project will adhere the Flood Hazard Reduction standards set forth in **Sec. 54-51** of Seguin's Flood Damage prevention Code. This variance will not add any additional threats to public safety in general or during flooding events. This variance will actually reduce the threat to public safety. It will reduce the fire hazard and safety hazards associated with an out of code electrical system. The addition of a fire suppression system will also reduce the chance of a fire destroying the entire structure. The modifications on the interior floor of the Pro Shop will also mitigate the chance of falls and bring the Pro Shop into ADA compliance. The remodeling project will remediate the current mold problems and the new roof will help to prevent the development of mold in the future.

3. Any application to whom a variance is granted shall be given written notice that the structure will be permitted to be built with the lowest floor elevation below the base flood elevation, and that the cost of flood insurance will be commensurate with the increased risk resulting from the reduced lowest floor elevation.

The Pro Shop is a one-story building and the project will not be affected by this code.

Staff believes the project meets all of the requirements and is recommending Council approval.