

**For Immediate Release:**

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**"OZONE HOUSE WINS YPSILANTI ZBA APPEAL"**

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Ann Arbor, MI- On Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, Ozone House, a non-profit agency that provides housing and support services to youth, won its appeal of the City of Ypsilanti's ZBA decision mandating Ozone House to seek a special use permit for its proposed use of the building at 30 N. Huron in Ypsilanti. Judge Melinda Morris reversed the Ypsilanti ZBA's decision immediately following oral arguments from attorneys representing Ozone House and the City of Ypsilanti.

On that date, the City's Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) ruled that the City's ordinance, which permits "residential uses", did not permit Ozone House to lease two apartments to individuals who are 18-21. This decision came despite the fact that the current landowner leases the two apartments in question, and that this use is explicitly permitted in the City's Zoning Ordinance. The ZBA's decision forced zone House to apply for a Special Use Permit, which was subsequently denied by the City's Planning Commission. The Commission argued that the plan to allow two youth to rent apartments downtown would not contribute to the economic vitality of the area.

Ozone House Executive Director Mary Jo Callan said, "We are gratified by the decision, and look forward to putting the rancor that has been a part of this process behind us. We will work in the coming days and weeks to determine our next steps, and we trust that the City will be willing to work with us to ensure that the needs and best interests of Ypsilanti's residents, especially its young people, are held paramount."

Ozone House has leased a storefront in downtown Ypsilanti since 1999, and has provided services to hundreds of youth from Ypsilanti at no cost to the City.

**For more information contact Mary Jo Callan 662-2222.**