

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 1, 2026 @7:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Amy Bell; Nicole Parker; Abigail Fellows; Paul Garcia, Vice Chairman

ABSENT: John Perkovich, Chairman

OTHERS: Vicki Grinstead, Secretary

Vice Chairman Garcia called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chairman Garcia noted that there were only four of the five members present this evening and the applicants would need at least three votes in favor to approve their applications or they ask to be tabled until a full membership of the board is present. All applicants wished to proceed.

Jake Balanik
4385 River St.

**Window replacements, exterior
painting of house and garage and
new front door w/sidelight**

Mr. Balanik, owner is representing the exterior painting of the house and garage and window replacements for the Balanik residence, 4385 River St., Willoughby, OH 44094.

Mr. Balanik requested approval to paint the house and garage a lighter blue, Sherwin Williams Vast Sky, and replace the existing vinyl windows with newer white vinyl windows. He also requested to amend the application to include replacing the red front door with a fiberglass door with the appearance of wood, submitted as Autumn, matching the existing door material.

Vice Chairman Garcia asked if the existing windows are wood and Mr. Balanik said they are all vinyl. He does not have an issue with the new door or the new windows. Mrs. Fellows agrees with Vice Chairman Garcia, however she would like to see all the windows facing the street have the grids/muntins since a majority of the windows already have them and Mr. Balanik agreed. She prefers wood windows because they are better for the environment.

Ms. Parker asked if he is leaving the white exterior door and window on the garage. Mr. Balanik said yes, they are both fairly new, however, the garage will also be repainted to match the house. Mrs. Bell stated she liked the color he picked for the home and garage.

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Mrs. Bell moved to approve the exterior painting of the house and garage and window replacements for the Balanik residence, 4385 River St., Willoughby, OH 44094 as submitted but with the stipulation that the street facing windows have grids and adding of the front door with sidelight and Ms. Parker seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Mrs. Bell; Mrs. Fellows; Ms. Parker; Mr. Garcia, Vice Chairman
 Nays: None
 Absent: Chairman Perkovich

Motion Carried: APPROVED

Acosta's Soup Kitchen
38233 Glenn Ave.
(Rep.- Edwin Acosta, Owner)

**Painting of shutters & added tiki
cover over awning, (1) illuminated
wall sign and (1) non-illuminated
painted projecting sign
w/sticker logo**

Mr. Acosta, owner is representing the painting of the shutters, an addition of a tiki cover over awning and (1) illuminated wall sign and (1) non-illuminated painted projecting sign w/sticker logo for the Acosta's Soup Kitchen, 38233 Glenn Ave., Willoughby, OH 44094.

Mr. Acosta provided a brief overview of his Spanish soup kitchen, which will serve the local community. He explained that he was unaware approval was required to repaint the building's shutters and to install the tiki-style covering over the existing dilapidated awning. He stated that the shutters were in poor condition and needed repainting, and that he wanted to add color to improve the appearance of the business. After receiving a notice from the City, he made no additional exterior changes and applied for the appropriate permits.

Mr. Acosta also presented plans for new business signage. He proposed installing a vinyl logo decal on the existing projecting sign, which he had repainted black because it was also in disrepair. In addition, he requested approval for a solar-illuminated wall sign displaying the business name. He explained that the sign would automatically illuminate at dusk and turn off at dawn using solar power.

The submitted rendering depicted two sun designs on either side of the business name. However, Mr. Acosta stated that he was uncertain whether he would include those elements, as he had not yet determined how they would be attached to the building. He indicated that he may consider alternative design options and would return for further review if he chose a design that differed from the one presented.

Vice Chairman Garcia stated that he liked the design of the projecting sign. However, the Board would like to see additional relief or dimensional elements incorporated into the sign, such as raised lettering, a shadow line, or a more pronounced border. The Board can approve the sign with these modifications, and the applicant may

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submit an updated rendering or photograph showing the revised design for the record. Specifically, the existing border should be made thicker, or the business name should be designed to stand out with added dimension.

Mrs. Fellows agreed with the previous comments regarding the signage but expressed concern about the use of two different fonts, noting that it could affect brand recognition for the business name. She stated that she would leave the choice of font to the applicant but recommended that both signs use the same font for consistency. The Board agreed with this recommendation.

Mrs. Fellows commented that the proposed tiki-style awning cover does not complement the historic character of the downtown area. While she understands the applicant's desire to create a tropical appearance, she emphasized the importance of maintaining the historic aesthetic of downtown Willoughby and suggested that a lighter color may be more appropriate. She also expressed concern about how the material will weather over time and whether it could become worn or tattered.

Vice Chairman Garcia agreed, stating that if the awning cover becomes damaged or tattered, it should be replaced to maintain the appearance of the property.

Ms. Parker agrees with Mrs. Fellows and would like the fonts on both signs to be consistent. She noted that not only are the fonts different, but one sign includes an apostrophe while the other does not. Her preference is for the wall sign font, although she believes either font would be appropriate as long as they are used consistently. She also likes the awning because it offers a distinctive appearance; however, she is concerned about its long-term durability and the potential wear and tear caused by inclement weather.

Ms. Parker moved to approve the painting of the shutters, an addition of a tiki cover over awning, (1) illuminated wall sign and (1) non-illuminated painted projecting sign w/sticker logo for the Acosta's Soup Kitchen, 38233 Glenn Ave., Willoughby, OH 44094 as submitted but with the stipulations 1) that the wall and projecting sign have the same style font, 2) the double-sided projecting sign sticker must have a thicker border, raised lettering or lettering has shadow lines, 3) it is the applicant's choice whether or not to install the two suns on either side of the wall sign or remove them; anything else added/changed applicant must come back before board, and 4) the tiki cover must be maintained; replaced if it is worn or damaged and Mrs. Bell seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Mrs. Fellows; Ms. Parker; Mrs. Bell; Mr. Garcia, Vice Chairman
 Nays: None
 Absent: Chairman Perkovich

Motion Carried: APPROVED

Root Haven
4080 Erie St.
(Rep.- Kara Grill, & Matt Smentana, Owners)

**(1) Non-illuminated projecting
sign**

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Ms. Grill and Mr. Smentana, owners are representing (1) non-illuminated projecting sign for Root Haven, 4080 Erie St., Willoughby, OH 44094.

Mr. Smentana explained they are proposing to install a new round hanging sign on the existing exterior bracket. He stated that the sign would feature raised acrylic lettering to provide dimension and that its light-colored background and bright lettering would complement the building's exterior.

Vice Chairman Garcia described the request as a straightforward application and noted that the applicant had submitted written permission from the building owner. He confirmed with Ms. Grill that the lettering would be raised acrylic, and she confirmed that it would, adding that the sign itself would be constructed of wood. Ms. Grill also clarified that the business is an indoor plant shop rather than a florist.

Mrs. Fellows asked how the sign would be installed. Mr. Smentana replied that it would have two holes at the top and would be suspended from the existing bracket with chains. Ms. Grill emphasized that the hanging sign is important because the business is located on the second floor. Mrs. Fellows then asked whether any additional signage was planned. Ms. Grill responded that they may add signage to the entrance door and place plants near the front entrance in the future.

Mrs. Fellows moved to approve (1) non-illuminated projecting sign with the stipulation that the lettering on the sign is raised acrylic, as stated by the applicant, for Root Haven, 4080 Erie St., Willoughby, OH 44094 and Ms. Parker seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Ms. Parker; Mrs. Bell; Mrs. Fellows; Mr. Garcia, Vice Chairman
 Nays: None
 Absent: Chairman Perkovich

Motion Carried: APPROVED

MINUTES

June 3, 2026

Ms. Parker moved to approve the Design Review Board minutes for June 3, 2026 as submitted and Mrs. Bell seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Mrs. Bell; Mrs. Fellows; Ms. Parker; Mr. Garcia, Vice Chairman
 Nays: None
 Absent: Chairman Perkovich

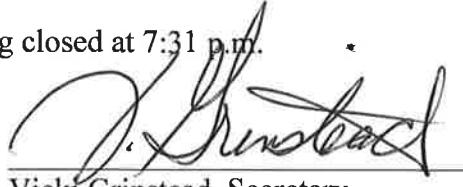
Motion Carried: APPROVED

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There being no further business the regular meeting closed at 7:31 p.m.



Paul Garcia, Vice Chairman



Vicki Grinstead, Secretary