

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY
MAY 14, 2026
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

PRESENT: J. Cook; K. Kary; Ben Capelle; S. Norris, Chairman

ABSENT: M. Wildermuth

OTHERS: Mike Lucas, Law Director; Vicki Grinstead, Secretary; Tim Lannon, City Engineer;
Darryl Keller, Chief Bldg. & Zoning Official

Chairman Norris called the regular in-person meeting to order at 7:14 p.m.

MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2026

Mr. Capelle moved to approve the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes for April 23, 2026 as submitted and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Ben Capelle; K. Kary; J. Cook; S. Norris, Chairman
 Absent: M. Wildermuth
 Nays: None

Motion Carried: APPROVED

Public Hearing Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2026

Mr. Capelle moved to approve the Planning Commission Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for April 23, 2026 as submitted and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: K. Kary; J. Cook; Ben Capelle; S. Norris, Chairman
 Absent: M. Wildermuth
 Nays: None

Motion Carried: APPROVED

OLD BUSINESS

This item remains tabled since there was no one to represent the application.

The Shankland Reserves

Shankland/PPN#27A0150000230 & 240

(Rep.- Greg Sommers, Sommers Development Group)

Major Subdivision/Final Plat &

Improvement Plans for 16 townhomes

NEW BUSINESS

Giles & Michelle Johnson
38507 N. Beachview Rd.

Lot split/combination 2 lots into 1
PPN#27-B-056-E-00-001-0

Mr. Johnson, 38507 N. Beachview Rd., Willoughby, OH 44094 is representing the lot split/combination of 2 lots into one for the Johnson residence, 38509 N. Beachview Rd./ PPN#27-B-056-E-00-001-0, Willoughby, OH 44094.

Chairman Norris said there are normally five members present but only four are present this evening and the applicant needs three of the four votes to pass their application and Mr. Johnson wished to proceed.

Mr. Johnson stated that his property backs up to the lake and has experienced erosion over the years. He further stated that they wish to split the neighboring lot along the shoreline and combine it with their property in an effort to prevent further erosion.

Mr. Kary stated that he had spoken with Councilperson Sievers, who indicated no objection to the request. He further noted that there were no issues or concerns from the City Engineer or the Law Department.

Mr. Capelle moved to approve the lot split/combination splitting 2 lots into 1 for Johnson residence, 38507 N. Beachview Rd./ PPN#27-B-056-E-00-001-0, Willoughby, OH 44094 as submitted and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: J. Cook; Ben Capelle; K. Kary; S. Norris, Chairman
 Absent: M. Wildermuth
 Nays: None

Motion Carried: APPROVED

John & Cindy Singleton
38446 S. Beachview Rd.

Lot split/combination 2 lots into 1
PPN#27B-056-J-00-017-0

Mrs. Singleton, 38446 S. Beachview Rd., Willoughby, OH 44094 is representing the lot split/combination of 2 lots into one for the Pietrangelo residence, 38509 N. Beachview Rd./ PPN#27B-056-J-00-017-0, Willoughby, OH 44094.

Mrs. Singleton stated that her neighbor owns the parcel of land between their two properties and has offered to divide it with them. She explained that an easement exists on the lot and that they wish to purchase twenty feet of the property so they may continue to maintain it.

There were no issues or concerns from the city engineer or law department.

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Chairman Norris said there are normally five members present but only four are present this evening and the applicant needs three of the four votes to pass their application and Mrs. Singleton wished to proceed.

Mr. Capelle moved to approve the lot split/combination splitting 2 lots into 1 for Singleton residence, 38446 S. Beachview Rd./ PPN#27B-056-J-00-017-0, Willoughby, OH 44094 as submitted and Mr. Cook seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Ben Capelle; K. Kary; J. Cook; S. Norris, Chairman
 Absent: M. Wildermuth
 Nays: None

Motion Carried: APPROVED

Lowe's
36300 Euclid Ave.
(Rep.- Todd Bartok, Lowes)

**Conditional Use Permit to allow
storage of bagged product, a temporary
customer quick load zone, permanent
lumber storage, a permanent outdoor
sales display, and a permanent appliance
trailer**

Mr. Bartok of Lowes, 36300 Euclid Ave., Willoughby, OH 44094 is representing the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow storage of bagged product, a temporary customer quick load zone, permanent lumber storage, a permanent outdoor sales display, and a permanent appliance trailer.

Mr. Bartok stated that he was previously unaware this change would present an issue, noting that large companies sometimes operate outside typical practices. He explained that when a new store manager is appointed, they often implement procedures from their previous location, which can create challenges if prior management records are not thoroughly reviewed. He also indicated that an increased volume of mulch brought in for the spring season may be contributing to site congestion, although it helps reduce the frequency of deliveries. Additionally, the fire department has expressed concerns about the revised plan, and efforts are being made to develop an approach that addresses those concerns. Finally, he noted that the mulch was relocated to the eastern side of the parking lot because it is adjacent to the garden center, where customers typically expect to find it.

Mr. Kary stated that it would have been more appropriate for the General Manager to submit the plan for approval prior to implementation. He noted that a similar proposal was presented to the Planning Commission several years ago, at which time the parking lot owner—whose property is leased—objected to its use for this purpose. As a result, the proposal was scaled back to the current Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

He emphasized that the Planning Commission should carefully consider limiting Lowe's outdoor storage and display areas, as similar allowances are not granted to other businesses within the city. Establishing such a CUP could create an inconsistent standard. Mr. Kary also observed that the current layout significantly disrupts traffic flow within the parking lot, describing it as functioning like "a store outside of a store."

He recommended that the CUP include clearly defined and stringent limitations on permissible outdoor storage.

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Additionally, he stressed that priority should be given to the Fire Department's recommendations, ensuring compliance with the Ohio Revised Code. Any further reductions beyond these requirements, where feasible, should also be considered.

Mr. Capelle stated that he shops at Lowe's frequently and is familiar with the situation. He said the loading zone functions more like a storage area, which regularly forces loading activity into the drive lane. He noted that if the area is designated as a loading zone, products should not be stored there. He agreed with the Fire Department's concern that the roadway is often completely blocked when customers load their vehicles in front of the store and said this should be taken into consideration.

Mr. Bartok stated that they want to communicate to their managers and district manager, "This is the plan you must follow," and that product cannot be placed in the loading zone. He added that the sidewalks could be painted to indicate that materials may not be stored outside the painted area. Mr. Capelle agreed that some type of permanent marking would be helpful, particularly given turnover at some of the larger stores. He further stated that better delineation of where items are permitted to be stored would be appropriate, provided there are no objections from the Fire Department.

Mr. Kary said the Fire Department had identified the mulch areas as an issue, but he asked whether the other displays throughout the parking lot were also infringing on the fire code. Captain Hum replied that the concern was not specifically what was being displayed, but where it was currently placed. He noted that his predecessor, Mike Kocab, had worked with the previous store manager to adjust the plan in the event of an emergency. Captain Hum said he believed the Fire Department could work with Lowe's to develop a plan that would work for everyone. He added that the current 2019 CUP outlines what is allowed and what has worked and noted that the new store manager had been unaware of the current CUP but could work through the plan.

Mr. Kary stated that he is concerned the business is using the exterior of the building, the parking lot, and the area surrounding the building as sales and storage space. Mr. Capelle agreed that the plan has gone too far, although he noted that it is common for stores of this type to keep certain products outdoors. He said that so many items are stored near the exits that it is difficult for customers to navigate carts out the door. He suggested limiting the quantity of items stored outdoors and evaluating what is placed outside to ensure it is safe. He also agreed with Mr. Kary's point that other stores are not permitted to have outdoor storage.

Mr. Cook agreed with Captain Hum and said that access to, and egress from the property are also issues that should be addressed, in addition to the fire lanes and code requirements.

Mr. Bartok said they provide more than one point of access for emergency vehicles and they wish to follow whatever the rules are. They do put product into the loading zone because it is not a fire access lane.

Chairman Norris stated that Lowe's is a valued member of the community; however, the Commission and safety forces have concerns that the store violated the existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) by expanding its outdoor storage and pick-up areas beyond what was originally approved. He emphasized that the current CUP was specifically designed to maintain clear access for fire safety and had been reviewed and approved by the fire official. The primary issue is that Lowe's implemented these changes without obtaining prior approval.

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Mr. Kary asked Captain Hum whether the previous CUP had worked for the fire department, and Captain Hum responded that it had. Mr. Kary then questioned why the commission would change it if it had been effective. Mr. Bartok explained that Lowe's was requesting the change to allow additional storage because its business model had changed. Chairman Norris stated that the proposed change was already creating issues and agreed with Mr. Kary that the existing CUP had been effective for all parties.

Mr. Capelle said they should table this to allow the applicant time to review the current CUP and resubmit his proposal. Mr. Cook suggested involving the current store manager so he is aware of these concerns and what the expectations are. Mr. Bartok agreed and said they will work to display the current plan for all the future store managers to follow.

Chairman Norris said he numbered the legends with 1-6 on the current plan. The staging areas of numbers 1 & 3 (seasonal bagged goods and storage and permanent treated lumber) to the west and south of that building. It is important to state clearly where these items can be. Number 4 (CMU block storage). Numbers 1, 2 & 4 according to the current CUP can take up to a maximum of 49 parking spaces. Considering what they wish to do with 1, 2 & 4 because it looks like 1 is potentially taking up circulation points on the western and southern side of the building so they want this to be clearly identified. Number 4 is seasonal quick load through March 1st through July 31st. Numbers 5 & 6 would be permanent outdoor sales and merchandise display and permanent live goods sales and display. He said these items should be clearly defined on the site plan and not just on the CUP.

Chairman Norris noted the fire department's concerns, which included fire lane encroachment, limited access to the sprinkler connections (F.D.C.), inadequate clear space around the structures, the impact of vehicle back-ups causing diminished access for fire vehicles, and the site's current noncompliance with the approved plan.

Mr. Bartok asked for his application to be tabled.

Mr. Capelle moved to table the Conditional Use Permit for Lowe's located at 36300 Euclid Ave., Willoughby, OH 44094 to allow storage of bagged product, a temporary customer quick load zone, permanent lumber storage, a permanent outdoor sales display, and a permanent appliance trailer per the applicant's request and Mr. Cook seconded.

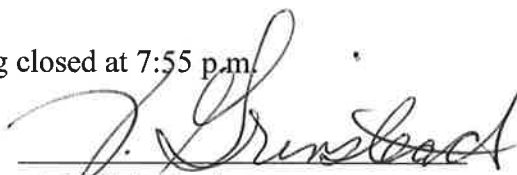
ROLL CALL: Yeas: K. Kary; J. Cook; Ben Capelle; S. Norris, Chairman
 Absent: M. Wildermuth
 Nays: None

Motion Carried: TABLED

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There being no further business the regular meeting closed at 7:55 p.m.


Steve Norris, Chairman


Vicki Grinstead, Secretary