BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY
OCTOBER 14, 2026
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
MINUTES

PRESENT: Mike Maniche; Phil Davis; Mike Yutzy; Mike Ross; Joe Palmer, Chairman
ABSENT: None
OTHERS: Luke McConville, Law Director; Vicki Grinstead, Secretary

Chairman Palmer called the regular meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Chairman Palmer advised the participants of their right to be heard in person or by attorney present and/or proffer evidence present and examine witnesses and the subpoena of evidence and/or witnesses. Chairman Palmer advised the participants that the board has five members of which a majority of the board is needed to grant an appeal. Chairman Palmer stated all five members of the board are present this evening and the applicants need a majority or three votes to pass their appeals. If an appeal is denied the applicant(s) has thirty days to file an appeal with the Lake County Court of Common Pleas. The appeal application, the letter of the meeting notification, the letter of non-compliance and the list of names and addresses of adjoining property owners within the required distant of the appellant were noted into the record.

MINUTES **September 9, 2026**

Mr. Ross moved to approve the Board of Zoning Appeals public hearing minutes for September 9, 2026 as submitted and Mr. Maniche seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Mr. Maniche; Mr. Ross; Mr. Davis; Mr. Yutzy; J. Palmer, Chairman
Nays: None
Absent: None

Motion Carried: APPROVED

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Brett Furlong **Accessory parking in side yard**
5800 Royal Dr. **& is 1' from side lot line**

Chairman Palmer stated the applicant cited practical difficulty numbers 1, 3, 4, 7 & 8 on the application for appeal and noted all items that were in the packet, including a letter from the applicant and letters from neighbors

in favor of this appeal. (Ariana Fiorita, 5812 Royal Dr., Eric Meyenberg, 5817 Royal Dr., & Erik Buckland, 5803 Royal Dr.)

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone who wished to speak for this appeal. Mr. Brett Furlong, 5800 Royal Drive, Willoughby, OH 44094 was sworn in to speak for this appeal.

Mr. Furlong stated that he had installed a pool and retaining wall in the backyard and that, during construction, the contractor cracked his driveway. Although he had not planned to replace the driveway at this time, he felt he had no choice and did not want it to become an eyesore. He added that they have four children; the oldest will soon be driving, with the others to follow in the coming years.

Mr. Furlong stated that he participates in motor sports and is requesting the variance to allow him to park his open trailer on the proposed driveway extension behind a screened area. He explained that the additional driveway space would benefit his growing family. The motorsports vehicle is stored in the garage, while the trailer is currently parked in the driveway. He was unaware that this was not permitted, which prompted his variance request.

Chairman Palmer noted that the Board frequently considers this type of variance; however, the proposed parking area would be located remarkably close to the lot line. He asked why the trailer could not be stored in the backyard. Mr. Furlong explained that an inground pool had been installed after the GIS photograph included in the packet was taken. He added that the pool deck, retaining wall, and enclosing fence leave insufficient space to accommodate the trailer.

Mr. Furlong stated that the proposed parking area would be approximately one foot from the property line. Concrete would extend to within one foot of the property line, with the remaining area consisting of a permeable surface, such as stone. He stated that a six-foot privacy fence would screen the area and believed this was why his neighbors supported the variance. Chairman Palmer asked for the dimensions of the trailer. Mr. Furlong replied that it is an open trailer measuring approximately 20 feet by 8.5 to 9 feet and would be well screened.

Mr. Davis questioned the practical difficulty factors selected by the applicant. He noted that factor No. 7 states that the owner's predicament feasibly can be obviated through some method other than a variance. Mr. Davis disagreed with the applicant's selection because the trailer could be stored off-site, and Mr. Furlong acknowledged that off-site storage was possible. Mr. Davis asked Mr. Furlong to clarify whether a personal or business vehicle would be parked on the driveway extension. Mr. Furlong responded that it would be a personal vehicle and explained that, once all of the children are driving, the existing driveway would not be long enough to accommodate the vehicles without obstructing the sidewalk.

Mr. Davis noted that practical difficulty factor No. 3 asks whether the variance is substantial and represents the minimum necessary to permit reasonable use of the land or structures. He further noted that the family had lived in the home for decades. Mr. Furlong agreed but stated that his grandfather had only two children.

Mr. Maniche noted that the work had already been completed. Mr. Furlong responded that he had not realized the work violated any ordinances. Mr. Maniche stated that permits had not initially been obtained for the retaining wall and had to be secured after the fact. Mr. Furlong explained that the contractor had assured him the permits

had been obtained, but apparently they had not. Mr. Maniche stated that the permit process had been bypassed twice and that Mr. Furlong was now seeking forgiveness rather than permission. Mr. Furlong replied that he had relied on the contractor's representation and on the contract, which stated that the contractor would obtain the permits. Mr. Maniche noted that permits are typically provided for posting in a window.

Mr. Ross noted that the overhead map showed several homes in the neighborhood with accessory driveways in the front yard. Mr. Davis clarified that the request concerned accessory parking in a side yard, and Chairman Palmer agreed, noting that the proposed area was specifically intended for a trailer.

Chairman Palmer asked whether the existing driveway could be widened. Mr. Furlong stated that the driveway itself had already been poured, but the accessory drive had not. He explained that adding the parking area while replacing the driveway appeared practical, but he had not realized that the contractor failed to update the permit application.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak for this appeal (x3) and there was no one.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone who wished to speak against this appeal (x3) and there was no one.

Mr. Yutzy moved to approve a variance to C.O. 1131.10(a) to allow side yard parking that is 1' from a side lot line, creating an encroachment of 4' instead of the allowable parking in a rear yard only with a minimum of 5' from the side lot line; citing C.O. 1109.09(b) for the Furlong residence, 5800 Royal Drive, Willoughby, OH 44094 and Mr. Maniche seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: Mr. Ross
Nays: Mr. Davis; Mr. Yutzy; Mr. Maniche; J. Palmer, Chairman
Absent: None

Motion Carried: DENIED

Ben Schuplin & Jackie Schaefer **Fence in corner side yard**
5289 Karen Isle Dr.

Chairman Palmer stated the applicant cited practical difficulty numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 on the application for appeal and noted all items that were in the packet, including a letter from the applicant.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone who wished to speak for this appeal. Mr. Schuplin and Ms. Schaefer, 5289 Karen Isle Drive, Willoughby, OH 44094 were both sworn in to speak for this appeal.

Mr. Schuplin stated that he had appeared before the Board approximately one year earlier and received a variance based on a compromise. He explained that the overall project includes a fence along the side yard, a pool and garden in the backyard, and a pathway between the detached garage and the home to provide safe access. His original request was for a fence located 3 feet from the right-of-way, consisting of 4 feet of solid fencing with 2 feet of lattice above it. At the previous meeting, he agreed to move the fence back to 10 feet but stated that he had

accepted the compromise hastily. He further stated that he had not addressed any of the practical difficulty factors in his prior application. In the current application, he selected all of the factors and provided an explanation for each, although he now believes some may not be relevant. After reviewing the plan again, the applicants determined that a 6-foot setback was the closest they could place the fence while retaining the pool, garden, and pathway as proposed. Mr. Schuplin acknowledged that two of the Board's primary concerns were traffic volume on the road and whether the fence would obstruct sight lines. He stated that, based on the photographs provided, the applicants believe a fence located 6 feet from the right-of-way would provide adequate space and visibility.

Chairman Palmer reiterated that the applicants were requesting a reduction from the previously approved 10-foot setback to 6 feet. The proposed wood fence would consist of 4 feet of privacy fencing with 2 feet of lattice above it. Mr. Schuplin stated that several similar fences exist in the neighborhood.

Referring to Mr. Schuplin's sight-line diagram, Mr. Davis noted that it depicted a vehicle moving forward toward the street from the driveway or garage rather than backing out. He stated that the previously approved 10-foot setback would provide a driver backing out with a view of the sidewalk, whereas a 6-foot setback would not. He further noted that Edison School is within sight of the property and that many children use the sidewalk. Mr. Davis stated that the visibility concern applies not only to the applicants but also to the neighboring property owner, who may back out of his or her driveway. He added that the other fences referenced by the applicants may have been permitted before the zoning regulations were changed.

Mr. Yutzy referred to photographs 1 and 2, which he stated illustrated the visibility issue described by Mr. Davis from the perspective of a vehicle backed into the driveway. However, referring to photograph 4, he stated that the truck would need to enter the sidewalk to obtain adequate visibility, potentially endangering pedestrians. Chairman Palmer stated that the Board's primary concern was the safety of children and other pedestrians using the sidewalk.

Mr. Schuplin stated that the current plan differs from the previous plan and, in his opinion, provides greater visibility. Chairman Palmer stated that he understood the argument but did not agree with it.

Mr. Maniche stated that much of the applicants' motivation appeared to be accommodating a pool and garden, and Ms. Schaefer agreed. He noted that, under practical difficulty factor No. 2, the applicants stated that the property would be used in a manner consistent with a typical residential backyard. Mr. Maniche responded that a pool is not typical of most backyards, citing that only 9% of homes in Ohio have a pool. He stated that much of the claimed hardship resulted from the applicants' preferences rather than necessity.

Mr. Ross stated that his son had attended Edison elementary school and that, over the years, he had observed many children leaving the school near that stop sign. He acknowledged that the applicants back their vehicle into the driveway but noted that the neighboring property owner does not and may lack adequate visibility when backing out. Mr. Ross displayed a street-view image on his laptop to illustrate his concern to the applicants. He reiterated that his primary concern was the safety of children.

Mr. Davis asked whether the previous approval remained valid. Mrs. Grinstead stated that it did not, explaining that the approval expired one year after the approval date of July 9, 2025. Mr. Davis indicated that he sought

clarification to determine whether the Board could offer the previously approved plan as a fallback option to the applicants.

Chairman Palmer asked whether the applicants wished to proceed with the current proposal for a 6-foot setback or accept the previously approved 10-foot setback for the fence. Mr. Schuplin requested that the Board vote on the current 6-foot proposal.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak for this appeal (x3) and there was no one.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone who wished to speak against this appeal (x3) and there was no one.

Mr. Yutzy moved to approve a variance to C.O. 1131.10(i)(2)A to allow 6' fence in a corner side yard and encroach 19' into the right-of-way, instead of the allowable 3' maximum height within 25' of a public right-of-way and comply with openness requirements; citing C.O. 1109.09(b) for the Schuplin and Schaefer residence, 5289 Karen Isle Drive, Willoughby, OH 44094 and Mr. Maniche seconded.

ROLL CALL: Yeas: None
Nays: Mr. Davis; Mr. Yutzy; Mr. Maniche; Mr. Ross; J. Palmer, Chairman
Absent: None

Motion Carried: DENIED

There being no further business the regular meeting closed at 7:46 p.m.

Joe Palmer, Chairman

Vicki Grinstead, Secretary