

**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY
JUNE 10, 2026
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Mike Yutzy; Mike Maniche; Phil Davis; Joe Palmer, Chairman

ABSENT: Mike Ross

OTHERS: Luke McConville, Law Director; Vicki Grinstead, Secretary

Chairman Palmer called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 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 not 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.

Chairman Palmer stated that there were only four of the five board members present this evening and both applicants confirmed they wished to proceed.

MINUTES

May 13, 2026

Mr. Maniche moved to approve the Board of Zoning Appeals public hearing meeting minutes for May 13, 2026 as submitted and Mr. Yutzy seconded.

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

Motion Carried: APPROVED

OLD BUSINESS

Ben Griffiths
4739 Maple St.

Addition to detached garage

Mr. Maniche moved to untable the appeal to C.O. 1131.10(d) for the Griffiths residence, 4739 Maple St., Willoughby, OH 44094 and Yutzy seconded.

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

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Motion Carried: UNTABLED

Chairman Palmer stated the applicant cited practical difficulty numbers 2, 3 and 8 on the application for appeal and noted all items that were in the packet.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone who wished to speak for this appeal. Mr. Griffiths, 4739 Maple St., Willoughby, OH 44094 was sworn in to speak for this appeal.

Mr. Griffiths requested a 160 sq. ft. variance to add storage and a small workshop to the rear of his existing garage. The addition would not be visible from the street, would be visible only to adjacent neighbors, and would sit 40' from the rear property line and 5' from the side property line without encroaching on neighboring property. He also plans to replace the windows, doors, and roof.

Chairman Palmer asked Mr. Griffiths to explain the need for the requested size of the addition. Mr. Griffiths stated the space would be used for storage and woodworking, and that he preferred to have a dedicated workspace separate from the residence. He explained that reducing the size would result in a width of approximately 9', which he felt would be too narrow for practical use.

Mr. Davis stated that if the addition were limited to 10' at the rear of the existing garage, an appeal would not be required. Mr. Griffiths responded that such a configuration would create a very narrow space. Mr. Davis indicated that practical difficulty number 8 appeared to be the most applicable to the request. Mr. Griffiths stated that the area behind the garage is not otherwise very usable, and they are attempting to make the best use of that space. Mr. Davis further stated that the proposed addition would have minimal visual impact from the street and on the neighboring properties on either side.

Chairman Palmer asked whether Mr. Griffiths could modify the proposed plan from 16' x 24' to 10' x 24'. Mr. Griffiths stated that he could consider the modification; however, he noted that a narrower space would make it difficult to work with full-size sheets of plywood. Chairman Palmer explained that the requested variance could set a precedent for the Board, particularly since the city recently revised the ordinance increasing the allowable square footage from 620 sq. ft. to 800 sq. ft. Mr. Griffiths stated that he would need to further evaluate whether the narrower space would be practical. Chairman Palmer asked whether Mr. Griffiths wished to table the request, and Mr. Griffiths stated that he would need to consider that option. Mr. Davis suggested that double doors could be added to the rear of the garage to assist with handling full-size sheets of plywood.

Mr. Griffiths asked whether, if he revised the plan, he would need to submit the revised plans to the Building Department. Chairman Palmer stated that he would, and that a copy should also be provided to Mrs. Grinstead for the record. Mr. Maniche stated that if Mr. Griffiths wished to modify the plan at the meeting, he could do so and the Board could consider approving the modified plan without requiring him to return before the Board. Mr. Griffiths stated that he would agree to 860 sq. ft.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak for this appeal. Mr. Kevin McCrone, 4733 Maple St., Willoughby, OH 44094 was sworn in to speak for this appeal.

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Mr. McCrone stated that he is the adjacent property owner and would be the most directly affected by the proposed project, noting that his driveway lies between the two homes. He explained that they maintain their property well and that their home has an old stone basement, which provides limited storage space. He commented that the submitted drawings were tastefully designed and acknowledged the Board's concern about establishing a precedent. However, he expressed hope that some form of variance could be granted.

Mr. McCrone further stated that, from an economic standpoint, limiting the structure to 8 or 9 feet would result in nearly the same construction cost as a 16-foot structure. He also indicated that installing double doors on the rear of the garage would not be aesthetically pleasing.

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.

Chairman Palmer read the modifications into record. The garage will be modified from 24' wide to 18' wide and maintained the depth of 16' for a total of 288 sq. ft. which is 64 sq. ft. over the limit, and this is what they will vote on.

Mr. Yutzy moved to approve a variance to C.O. 1131.10(d) to allow a detached garage addition of 864 sq. ft., exceeding the allowable by 64 sq. ft., instead of the allowable 800 sq. ft. for the total area of all accessory buildings; citing C.O. 1109.09(b) for Griffiths residence, 4739 Maple St., Willoughby, OH 44094 and Mr. Maniche seconded.

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

Motion Carried: APPROVED

NEW BUSINESS

Paul & Kristen Santone
2680 Trafalgar Sq.

Accessory bldg./playhouse

Chairman Palmer stated the applicant cited practical difficulty numbers 4, 6, 7 & 8 on the application for appeal and noted all items that were in the packet.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone who wished to speak for this appeal. Mr. Santone, 2680 Trafalgar Sq., Willoughby, OH Willoughby, OH 44094 was sworn in to speak for this appeal.

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Mr. Santone sincerely apologizes for the situation and was unaware that a permit was required for the playhouse. Based on information he found online, he believed that structures under 200 square feet did not require a permit. Upon receiving the City's notice, he immediately ceased any further construction on the playhouse.

Mr. Santone and his family have two young children and were simply trying to provide them with a safe outdoor space to play rather than spending more time on electronic devices. The playhouse was intended to give the children a shaded and cooler place to enjoy outdoor activities during hot weather.

Chairman Palmer asked whether Mr. Griffiths knew the size of the existing shed. Mr. Griffiths stated that it was approximately 70 square feet (7' x 10').

Chairman Palmer noted that adding the proposed 192-square-foot structure to the existing 70-square-foot shed would result in a total of 262 square feet, exceeding the allowable limit by 62 square feet. He further explained that exterior landings, porches, and similar features should not be included in the square footage calculation, which is how the 192-square-foot figure was determined.

Mr. Santone stated that the framing and walls were already in place and that the structure would not be any larger than its current size.

Mr. Maniche asked whether Mr. Griffiths intended to keep the existing shed. Mr. Griffiths replied that he did, explaining that he uses it to store lawn and garden equipment. He added that if the shed were demolished, he would have nowhere to store that equipment.

Chairman Palmer asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak for this appeal. Chairman Palmer noted into record letters in favor of this appeal from: Erin Gasparro, 2692 Westminster Lane, Cynthia Lacombe, 2690 Trafalgar Sq., Robert and Linda Orston, 267 Westminster Lane and Jackson and Michelle Sumpter, 2667 Westminster Lane.

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.

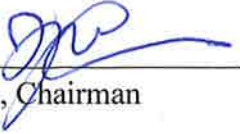
Mr. Yutzy moved to approve a variance to C.O. 1131.10(d)(3) to allow an accessory building/playhouse of 192 sq. ft. including another accessory building of 70 sq. ft. exceeding the allowable by 62 sq. ft. instead of the allowable 200 sq. ft. maximum for accessory buildings if the dwelling has an attached garage; citing C.O. 1109.09(b) for Santone residence, 2680 Trafalgar Sq., Willoughby, OH 44094 and Mr. Maniche seconded.

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

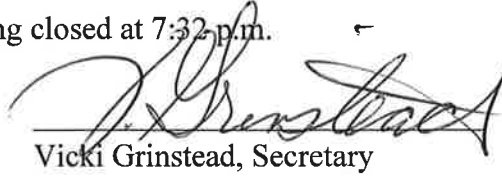
Motion Carried: APPROVED

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There being no further business the regular meeting closed at 7:32 p.m.



Joe Palmer, Chairman



Vicki Grinstead, Secretary