



Zoning Board of Appeals - Regular Session Agenda
Government Center Boardroom, 4th Floor, Room #400
115 E. Washington St., Bloomington, IL 61701
Wednesday, November 19, 2025 - 4:00 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Public Comment

Individuals wishing to provide emailed public comment must email comments to publiccomment@cityblm.org at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. Individuals wishing to speak in-person may register at cityblm.org/register at least 5 minutes before the start of the meeting.

4. Consent Agenda

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled from the Consent Agenda are listed and voted on separately.

- A. **Review and approval of the Minutes of the October 15, 2025, regular meeting of the Bloomington Zoning Board of Appeals, as requested by the Department.** (Recommended Motion: Motion to accept the minutes, as presented.)

5. Regular Agenda

All license creations, amendments or transfers are contingent upon compliance with all building, health and safety codes.

- A. **V-12-25 - Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Catalyst Construction and Todd Bresney, CMI Investments, LLC (owner), for a Variance from § 44-503 (Table 503B) of the Zoning Code, to allow a reduced Front Yard setback in the D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District for the property located at 237 E. Front Street, PIN: 21-04-413-017, as requested by the Development Services Department.** (Recommended Motion: The request for a Variance be denied.)
- B. **Boards & Commissions Refresher Presentation, as requested by the Legal Department.** (Recommended Motion: None; Presentation Only.)

6. New Business

7. Adjournment

Individuals with disabilities planning to attend the meeting who require reasonable accommodations to observe and/or participate, or who have questions about the accessibility of the meeting, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator at 309-434-2468 or mhurt@cityblm.org.



Consent Agenda Item No. 4.A.

For Zoning Board of Appeals: November 19, 2025

Ward Impacted: City Wide

Subject: Review and approval of the Minutes of the October 15, 2025, regular meeting of the Bloomington Zoning Board of Appeals, as requested by the Department.

Recommended Motion: Motion to accept the minutes, as presented.

Strategic Plan:

Goal: Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services.

Objective: Engaged residents that are well informed and involved in an open governance process.

Background: In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Board Minutes must be approved thirty (30) days after the meeting or at the second subsequent regular meeting whichever is later.

Community Groups/Interested Persons Contacted: N/A

Financial Impact: N/A

Attachments:

1. ZBA Minutes 2025-10-15 - DRAFT



**DRAFT MINUTES
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS - REGULAR SESSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025, 4:00 PM**

The Zoning Board of Appeals convened in regular session at 4:01 PM, October 15, 2025. Board Chair Ballantini called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Matt Steinkoenig	Board Member	Present
Becky Welch	Board Member	Present
Melissa Woods	Board Member	Present
Victoria Harris	Board Member	Present
Nikki Williams	Board Member	Present
Terry Ballantini	Board Chair	Present
John Poling	Board Member	Present

City staff present included Jon Branham, Planner II; Marcus Ricci, Planner III, Alissa Pemberton, Planning Manager; Kelly Pfeifer, Director of Development Services.

Public Comment

Julia Sutherland (501 E. Olive Street) stated she recently had lost a second pet due to a speeding vehicle on her street. She expressed concern about excessive vehicle speeds in the area near her residence between Oakland Avenue and Washington Avenue.

Consent Agenda

Board Member Poling made a motion, seconded by Board Member Harris, to approve the item as submitted.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig
Motion carried (viva voce).

Item 4.A. Review and approval of the minutes of the August 20, 2025, regular meeting of the Bloomington Zoning Board of Appeals.

Board Member Harris made a motion, seconded by Board Member Woods, to approve the item as submitted.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig
Motion carried (viva voce).

Item 4.B. Review and approval of the minutes of the September 17, 2025, regular meeting of the Bloomington Zoning Board of Appeals.

Regular Agenda

The following items were presented:

Item 5.A. **SP-05-25** - Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Julia Sutherland, for a Special Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit in the R-2 (Mixed Residence) District, for the property located at 501 E. Olive Street, PIN: 21-04-457-001.

Ms. Pemberton presented the staff report with a recommendation for approval. She provided a brief background of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), including recent text amendments to help allow them with associated Use Provisions. She reviewed the surrounding zoning and land uses. She described the characteristics of the property and details of the request, including building location. She noted compliance with the standards was outlined in the staff report and could be reviewed in person, upon request of the Board.

Board Member Harris inquired about the number of entrances to the proposed ADU. Ms. Pemberton stated the number of entrances was governed by the Building Code. She clarified the zoning aspects of the review and described the required Use Provisions.

Board Chair Ballantini opened the public hearing.

Julia Sutherland (Applicant, 501 E. Olive Street), provided further background on the project. She stated the ADU would allow for her mother to live on her property independently. She noted the unit would include a kitchen and bathroom.

Noah Tang, (President, Strong Towns of Blono, 504 E. Olive Street) supported the request and noted the positive impacts ADUs can provide.

Board Chair Ballantini closed the public hearing.

Chair Ballantini stated it seemed like a straightforward request.

Board Member Woods made a motion, seconded by Board Member Poling, to establish findings of fact that all of the factors for granting a Special Use Permit are met, as presented in the Staff Report, and to recommend approval of the item as presented.

Roll call.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig

Motion passed.

Ms. Pemberton stated this item would proceed to City Council on November 10th.

Item 5.B. **SP-06-25** - Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by FMB Holdings, Inc., for a Special Use Permit for Mini Warehouses with waivers of Use Provisions, in the B-1 (General Commercial) District, for the property located at 1402 E. Empire Street, PIN: 14-35-354-012.

Mr. Ricci presented the staff report with a recommendation for approval. He reviewed the surrounding zoning and land uses. He described the characteristics of the property and the nature of the request, which included converting a former self-serve car wash to a self-serve storage facility. He described the associated Use Provisions and stated the Applicant was requesting waivers and reductions related to perimeter landscaping and fencing requirements, due to the infill nature of the property. He stated the Staff recommendations would result in the Applicant being required to remove the existing light pole fixtures on the property and submit a landscape plan. He stated compliance with the standards was outlined in the staff report and could be reviewed in person, upon request of the Board.

Board Chair Ballantini opened the public hearing.

Beth Olson (Representing Applicant, Bloomington, IL), provided further background on the project.

Board Member Welch asked for clarification regarding the number of exterior doors. Ms. Olson provided clarification that there are nine units, one of the doors looks different and is not as easily visible as the others.

Board Chair Ballantini inquired whether the property was rented. Ms. Olson stated it was not currently rented and has previously been utilized for the Applicant's personal storage.

Board Member Poling inquired whether the request was coming after-the-fact and whether any other inspections would be required. Mr. Ricci stated the project was not complete and would require additional permitting and inspection from the Building Safety Division.

Board Chair Ballantini inquired if there would be additional lighting provided after the light poles were removed. It was confirmed that the property would have new wall lighting installed.

Board Member Woods stated the conversion of this kind seems atypical. She noted it could be worth considering whether this use is appropriate in the district in the future since commercial property with good visibility from multiple frontages could be better used.

Board Chair Ballantini stated there were several car washes in the City, but not many storage facilities.

Ms. Pemberton concurred with Board Member Woods on the intent of the B-1 District but stated the previous owner had struggled with vehicular access to the property after the adjacent intersection was redesigned and most customer-intensive commercial uses could be expected to have the same difficulty on this particular property. While the frontages provide visibility, they provide little direct access to this property due to the new "left turn only", resulting in the long-term vacancy and request for Special Use Permit.

Mr. Ricci stated the purpose of the Special Use Permit was to limit the use within the B-1 District, but Staff believes this is a positive use of the existing building and provides active occupancy and maintenance of the property.

Board Member Poling stated it was highly desirable to have the additional landscaping provided, even with the reductions and waivers requested; he stated it would improve the look of the property.

Board Chair Ballantini closed the public hearing.

Board Member Poling made a motion, seconded by Board Member Steinkoenig, to establish findings of fact that all of the factors for granting a Special Use Permit are met, as presented in the Staff Report, and recommend approval of the item as presented, with the following Use Provision Waivers and Conditions:

- **Reduction of the fencing requirement in § 44-1026A(1) to a requirement to extend the existing six-foot-tall opaque wood fence along the north property line westward to the west property line.**
- **Reduction of the landscaping requirement in § 44-1026A(3) to the following:**
 - **install a line of evergreen shrubs between the south edge of the parking lot and the south property line and install a shade tree south of the existing billboard.**
 - **install three shade trees along the west property line.**
- **A Landscaping Plan must be submitted and approved showing the required fencing and landscaping.**
- **A revised Site Plan must be submitted showing traffic circulation and parking spaces.**

Roll call.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig

Motion passed.

Mr. Ricci stated this item would proceed to City Council on November 10th.

Item 5.C. **SP-07-25** - Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Sid Edwards dba Kingdom City Boxing, for a Special Use Permit for a Sports & Fitness Establishment in the R-3A (Multi-Family Residence) District, for the property located 1201 N. Hershey Road, PIN: 14-36-300-002.

Mr. Ricci presented the staff report with a recommendation for approval. He reviewed the surrounding zoning and land uses. He described the characteristics of the property and the nature of the request for a boxing facility (Sports & Fitness Establishment) at the current YWCA. He noted it would be occupying a vacant space left from the closure of the indoor pool area. He stated compliance with the standards was outlined in the staff report and could be reviewed in person, upon request of the Board.

Board Chair Ballantini opened the public hearing.

Sid Edwards (Applicant, Normal, IL), provided further background on the project.

Board Chair Ballantini inquired how long the Applicant had been in operation. Mr. Edwards stated he had been in operation for four years at various locations and is looking for a more permanent facility.

Board Chair Ballantini inquired whether self-defense was included in the operation's program. Mr. Edwards confirmed, identified other programs offered and benefits, and noted how his efforts align with some of the existing YWCA programs.

Tyler Thornton (Normal, IL) stated he believed in the Applicant's vision and expressed support for the project.

Liz German (Normal, IL) stated she represented the property owner, YWCA. She offered support for the project and provided further background on how the operation would function within the current space.

Board Chair Ballantini asked Ms. German whether she had any concerns. She stated she did not.

Board Member Harris inquired about Mr. Edwards' credentials to teach boxing. Mr. Edwards stated he was a certified USA boxing coach.

Sonny Garcia (1115 W. Olive Street) stated he supported the request.

Kendra Smith (Normal, IL) stated she supported the request and provided details on how the operation had positively impacted her family.

Board Chair Ballantini closed the public hearing.

Board Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Board Member Steinkoenig, to establish findings of fact that all of the factors for granting a Special Use Permit are met, as presented in the Staff Report, and recommend approval of the item as presented.

Roll call.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig

Motion passed.

Mr. Ricci stated this item would proceed to City Council on November 10th.

New Business - Election of Vice-Chair

Board Chair Ballantini stated they would need to elect a new Vice-Chair as it was postponed from the last meeting.

Board Member Harris made a motion to elect Board Member Willams as Vice Chair. Board Member Williams accepted the nomination. Board Member Steinkoenig seconded the motion.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig

Motion passed (viva voce).

Adjournment

Board Member Poling made a motion, seconded by Board Member Williams, to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Ballantini; Harris; Williams; Poling, Woods, Welch, Steinkoenig

Motion passed (viva voce).

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

Terry Ballantini, Board Chair

Jon Branham, Staff Liaison



City of Bloomington

Zoning Board of Appeals

October 15, 2025



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

Regular Agenda

Item	Case Number	Description
5.A.	SP-05-25	Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Julia Sutherland, for a Special Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit in the R-2 (Mixed Residence) District, for the property located at 501 E. Olive St. (PIN: 21-04-457-001)
5.B.	SP-06-25	Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by FMB Holding, Inc., for a Special Use Permit for Mini Warehouses with waivers of Use Provisions, in the B-1 (General Commercial) District, for the property located at 1402 E. Empire St. (PIN: 14-35- 354-012)
5.C.	SP-07-25	Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Sid Edwards dba Kingdom City Boxing for a Special Use Permit for a Sports and Fitness Establishment in the R-3A (Multiple-Family Residence) District, for the property located at 1201 N. Hershey Rd. (PIN: 14-36-300-002).

SP-05-25

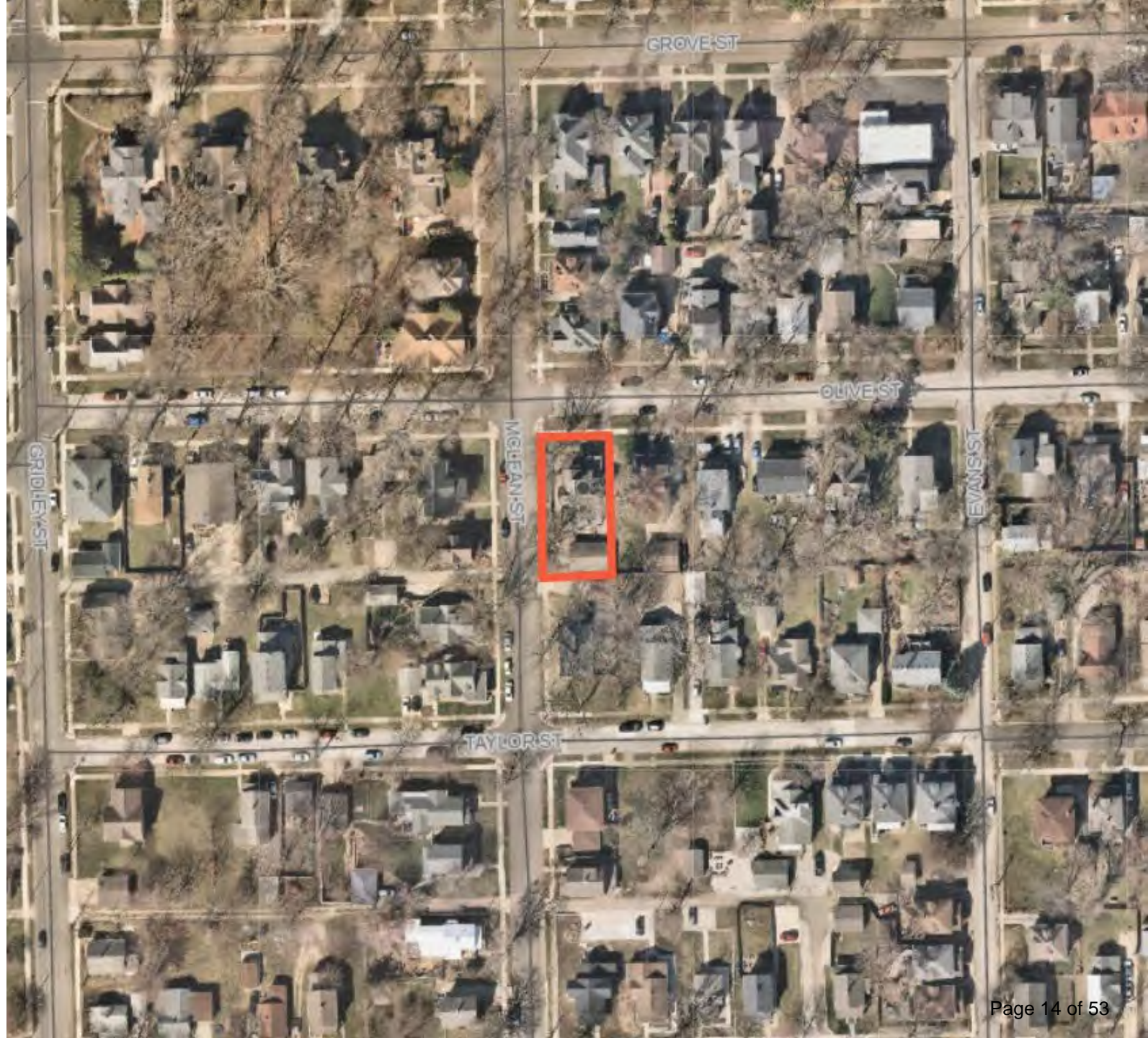
Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Julia Sutherland, for a Special Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit in the R-2 (Mixed Residence) District, for the property located at 501 E. Olive St. PIN: 21-04-457-001.



Zoning Map



Aerial Map



Front/Side View



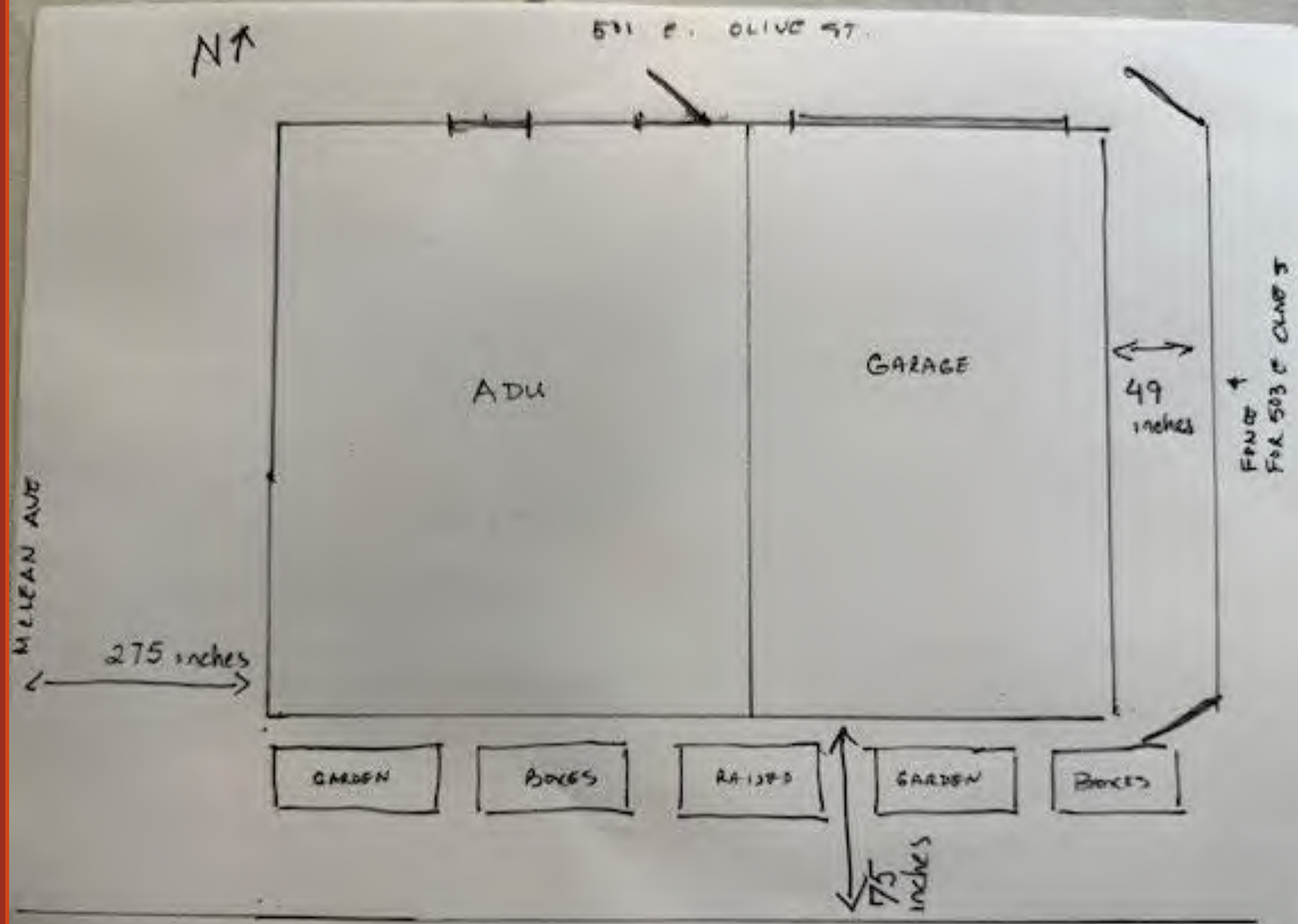
Rear/Side View



Side/Rear View



Site Plan



Findings of Fact - Special Use

Standard	Finding
1. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the Special Use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort, or general welfare.	Standard is met.
2. The Special Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.	Standard is met.
3. The establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the zoning district.	Standard is met.
4. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or will be provided.	Standard is met.
5. Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.	Standard is met.
6. The Special Use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may be modified by the Council pursuant to the recommendations of the Board of Zoning Appeals.	Standard is met.

Use Provisions - ADUs

Standard

The primary building shall be a single-family detached use and the primary residence of the owner of the property.

Accessory dwelling units shall not be greater than 800 square feet or 50% of the size of the primary building, whichever is less. Detached accessory dwelling units are limited to 80% of the height of the subject district, or a height which is minor in character to the primary building, whichever is less.

Accessory dwelling units shall be located in the rear of the primary structure and shall comply with all location requirements for accessory buildings found in § 44-908.

Only one entrance shall be located on the front facade of the primary building. Entrances to accessory dwelling units must be located on the side or rear facade.

Accessory dwelling units shall be accessed from the alley. If alley access is not available, both the primary building and the accessory dwelling unit shall be served by one common driveway connecting the accessory dwelling unit to a public or private road.

A minimum of one parking space shall be provided for the accessory dwelling unit in addition to the parking space(s) required for the primary building. The parking for the accessory dwelling unit shall not be located in the required front yard setback. A tandem parking space, where one car is parked behind another, with the spaces required for the primary building shall be prohibited.

Accessory dwelling units shall be similar in character to the primary building and to abutting properties, including roof pitch, eaves, building materials, windows, trim, color, and landscaping.



Staff Recommendation

CASE SP-05-25

Based upon the applicant's submitted information, Staff finds that the application **does meet all the standards** for granting a Special Use Permit.

Recommended Action(s)

Motion to establish findings of fact that all of the factors for granting a Special Use Permit are met, as presented in the Staff Report, and to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit to Council.

Aerial View



Site Photo



Site Photo



Site Photo



Use Provisions - Mini Warehouses

Standard

1. A six-foot-high opaque fence is required around the perimeter of the lot.
 - Staff recommend waiving the fence requirement on the east, south, and west property lines: the easterly-adjacent pawn shop use does not require a visual barrier, and a fence along the street frontages would worsen the viewshed for passersby.
 2. A twelve-foot-wide landscape buffer is required along both street frontages and along the north property line abutting a residential district.
 - Staff recommend reducing this requirement to: extending the existing fence along the north property line, installing landscaping along the south property line, and installing shade trees along the west property line.
 3. Site circulations use provisions 1-3: update the site plan with dimensions of parking spaces and drive aisles.
 4. Storage cubicle area: the proposed plan complies with this provision.
 5. Maximum building height: the proposed plan complies with this provision.
- * The Applicant must submit a Landscape Plan showing all existing and proposed fencing and landscaping.
- ** Staff recommend requiring the removal of the five existing parking lot light fixtures and poles.

Findings of Fact - Special Use

Standard	Finding
1. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the Special Use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort, or general welfare.	Standard is met.
2. The Special Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.	Standard is met.
3. The establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the zoning district.	Standard is met.
4. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or will be provided.	Standard is met.
5. Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.	Standard is met.
6. The Special Use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may be modified by the Council pursuant to the recommendations of the Board of Zoning Appeals.	Standard is met.

Findings of Fact - Special Use Permit

Standard	Finding
1. That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the Special Use will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, comfort, or general welfare, as the proposed Mini Warehouse would generate less traffic than the previous use, and installation of required fencing and landscaping would improve the visual aesthetic of the intersection and reduce noise to the neighboring apartment building.	Standard is met.
2. That the Special Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity, nor substantially diminish property values within the neighborhood, as the proposed Mini Warehouse use would restore a vacant site to an active and functional use, and reduce traffic and noise as compared to the previous permitted car wash use.	Standard is met.
3. That the establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the zoning district, as the proposed Mini Warehouse use would be consistent with the character of other uses in the area.	Standard is met.
4. That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities will be provided, as necessary road access is existing and the proposed Mini Warehouse use will generate no additional stormwater runoff and will not use water or generate wastewater.	Standard is met.
5. That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide access so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets, as the proposed Mini Warehouse use will use the two existing access points along Fairway Drive and East Empire Road, provided the site plan be revised to show aisle and parking space dimensions and markings.	Standard is met.
6. That the Special Use shall conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, as the proposed use will use the two existing access points along Fairway Drive and East Empire Road, and provided that the site plan be revised to show aisle and parking space dimensions and markings.	Standard is met.



Staff Recommendation

CASE SP-06-25

Staff finds that the application meets all the standards for a Special Use Permit.

Recommended Action(s)

Motion to establish findings of fact that all standards for approval of a Special Use Permit are met and to recommend approval of the request for a Special Use Permit for a Mini Warehouse, in the B-1 (General Commercial) District, for the property located at 1402 E. Empire Street, with the following Use Provision Waivers and Conditions:

- Reduction of the fencing requirement in § 44-1026A(1) to a requirement to extend the existing six-foot-tall opaque wood fence along the north property line westward to the west property line.
- Reduction of the landscaping requirement in § 44-1026A(3) to the following:
 - install a line of evergreen shrubs between the south edge of the parking lot and the south property line and install a shade tree south of the existing billboard.
 - install three shade trees along the west property line.
- A Landscaping Plan must be submitted and approved showing the required fencing and landscaping.
- A revised Site Plan must be submitted showing traffic circulation and parking spaces.

SP-07-25

1201 N. Hershey Rd.

Current & Adjacent Zoning

Surrounding uses:

- North – Single-Family Dwellings (R-1C - Single-Family Residence)
- South – Vehicle Fueling Station, Fire Station (R-1C and B-1 – General Commercial)
- East – Retail Sales, General; Medical Clinic; Single-Family Dwellings (R-1C and B-1 – General Commercial)
- West – Retail Sales, General; Multiple- & Single-Family Dwellings (R-1B – Single-Family Residence; B-1 with S-1 Overlay; R-3A with/without S-1 Overlay)



Aerial View



Site Photo



Site Photo



Site Photo



Findings of Fact - Special Use

Standard	Finding
1. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the Special Use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort, or general welfare.	Standard is met.
2. The Special Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.	Standard is met.
3. The establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the zoning district.	Standard is met.
4. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or will be provided.	Standard is met.
5. Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.	Standard is met.
6. The Special Use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may be modified by the Council pursuant to the recommendations of the Board of Zoning Appeals.	Standard is met.

Findings of Fact - Special Use Permit

Standard	Finding
1. That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the Special Use will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, comfort, or general welfare, as the proposed Sports & Fitness Establishment is similar to other services the current use has provided since the 1970s.	Standard is met.
2. That the Special Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity, nor substantially diminish property values within the neighborhood, as the proposed Sports & Fitness Establishment use would restore a dormant storage area to an active sports education and fitness training use in a residential neighborhood.	Standard is met.
3. That the establishment of the Special Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the zoning district, as the proposed Sports & Fitness Establishment finding that the proposed Sports and Fitness Establishment use is consistent with the historic and current uses of the building, and would continue to be in character with the nearby commercial uses in supporting the neighboring multifamily residential use.	Standard is met.
4. That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities will be provided, as the proposed Sports & Fitness Establishment would not expand the building footprint and would be serviced by the existing utilities and roads at the site.	Standard is met.
5. That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide access so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets, as the proposed Sports & Fitness Establishment use would be accessed from the existing parking lot using the two existing access points along N. Hershey Road.	Standard is met.
6. That the proposed Sports and Fitness Establishment use within the footprint of the existing building meets the standards for the District.	Standard is met.



Staff Recommendation

CASE SP-07-25

Staff finds that the application meets all the standards for a Special Use Permit.

Recommended Action(s)

Motion to establish findings of fact that all standards for approval of a Special Use Permit are met and to recommend approval of the request for a Special Use Permit for a Sports & Fitness Establishment, in the R-3A (Multiple-Family Residence) District, for the property located at 1201 N. Hershey Rd., as submitted.



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

Regular Agenda

Item	Case Number	Description
6.	---	New Business - Elect Board Chair and Vice-Chair
7.	---	Adjournment



Next ZBA Meeting: November 19, 2025



Regular Agenda Item No. 5.A.

For Zoning Board of Appeals: November 19, 2025

Ward Impacted: Ward 6

Subject: V-12-25 - Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Catalyst Construction and Todd Bresney, CMI Investments, LLC (owner), for a Variance from § 44-503 (Table 503B) of the Zoning Code, to allow a reduced Front Yard setback in the D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District for the property located at 237 E. Front Street, PIN: 21-04-413-017, as requested by the Development Services Department.

Recommended Motion: The request for a Variance be denied.

Strategic Plan:

Goal 5. Great Place - Livable, Sustainable City

Objective 5b. City decisions consistent with plans and policies

Background: The Applicant seeks a Variance from § 44-503 (Table 503B), the requirement of a minimum five-foot (5) front yard setback, to allow a three-foot (3) front yard setback at the subject property.

The Applicant proposes to remodel the existing one-story structure, including a new front entry area that would shift the existing recessed entry three feet forward to align with the front façade of the building. Structures in the D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District, require a minimum front yard setback of five (5) feet (§ 44-503B).

Community Groups/Interested Persons Contacted: The application was filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements. Notice was published in The Pantagraph on Tuesday, November 4, 2025. Courtesy notices were mailed to 47 property owners within 500 feet of the subject property.

Financial Impact: N/A

Attachments:

1. Staff Report, including Attachments 1-4
2. Attachment 5- Site Plans
3. Attachment 6 - Elevations



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

TO: ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

FROM: Development Services Department

DATE: November 19, 2025

CASE NO: V-12-25, Variance from § 44-503 (Table 503B) of the Zoning Code

REQUEST: Public hearing, review, and action on a request submitted by Catalyst Construction and Todd Bresney, CMI Investments, LLC (owner), for a Variance from § 44-503 (Table 503B) of the Zoning Code, to allow a reduced Front Yard setback in the D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District for the property located at 237 E. Front Street, PIN: 21-04-413-017.

BACKGROUND

Request

The Applicant seeks a Variance from § 44-503 (Table 503B), the requirement of a minimum five-foot (5) front yard setback, to allow a three-foot (3) front yard setback at the subject property.

The Applicant proposes to remodel the existing one-story structure, which would include a new front entry area that would shift the existing recessed entry three feet forward to align with the front façade of the building. Structures in the D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District, require a minimum front yard setback of five (5) feet (§ 44-503B).

Notice

The application was filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements. Notice was published in *The Pantagraph* on Tuesday, November 4, 2025. Courtesy notices were mailed to 47 property owners within 500 feet of the subject property.

ANALYSIS

Property Characteristics

The subject property is comprised of one lot of record, approximately 10,890 square feet (0.25 acres), located at the intersection of E. Front Street and S. Prairie Street, in James White’s Addition to the City of Bloomington. Currently, the lot is occupied with a one-story office building with associated parking located behind the building. The surrounding properties are classified with the D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District zoning. The surrounding land uses consist of a mix of uses.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses

	Zoning	Land Uses
North	D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District	Mixed Use
South	D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District	Office
East	D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District	Mixed Use
West	D-2 (Downtown Transitional) District	Mixed Use

Description of Current Zoning District

The intent of this D-2 Downtown Transitional District is to complement and support the uses located in the D-1 Central Business District. Office, service and civic uses, as well as residential apartments and multifamily dwelling units, are appropriate in this district. Due to its transitional location between the central business district and outlying residential areas, the D-2 District permits development at a lower intensity and density than the downtown core. Pedestrian circulation is prioritized. To this end, buildings should be located close to the sidewalk with on-site parking located to the rear of the parcel and accessed from secondary roadways or alleys, though modest setbacks for courtyards, gardens and other similar amenities may be provided.

Subject Code Requirements

§ 44-503. Site dimensions table. All development in Business Districts District must comply with the requirements in Tables 503A and 503B and Diagram 503A unless otherwise expressly stated.

Table 503B: Bulk and Site Standards D-1, D-2, D-3 Districts									
District	Lot Characteristics		Site Design				Development Intensity		
	Minimum Lot Width (W)	Minimum Lot Area (square feet)	Front Yard (F)	Max.	Side Yard (S)	Rear Yard (R)	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Maximum Building Height	
			Min.		Min.	Min.		Feet	Stories
D-1	25 feet	—	—	5 feet	—	—	12.0		
D-2									
In General	40 feet	—	5 feet	15 feet	5 feet	5 feet		65 feet	6
Adjoining Res. District	40 feet	—	15 feet	25 feet	Min. 6 feet; or 1/3 of building height for buildings > 3 stories	Min. 12 feet; or 1/3 of building height for buildings > 3 stories		55 feet	4

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

As indicated in *Ch. 44, 17-8 Variations*, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall have the power to authorize Variations to this Code where there would be practical difficulties or particular hardships in carrying out the strict letter of those sections of this Code stated herein.

1. **That the property has physical characteristics that pose unreasonable challenges which make strict adherence to the Code difficult.**

From the Applicant: Yes, the property has physical characteristics that pose unreasonable challenges to strict adherence to the zoning code. The existing building is set only 3 feet back from the property line, and the entry doors are recessed approximately 6 feet back from this. This limited setback restricts our ability to make necessary improvements without extending slightly into the setback area. These physical constraints make it difficult to adhere to the code.

From Staff: There appear to be no physical characteristics of the property that make meeting Code requirements challenging. It is being actively used in an appropriate manner (permitted use) and is already non-conforming with an existing setback of only three (3) feet. **Standard is not met.**

2. **That the Variance would be the minimum action necessary to afford relief to the applicant.**

From the Applicant: Yes, the variance requested is the minimum action necessary to afford relief. The current door setback creates functional challenges that cannot be resolved without bringing the

doors forward. Moving the doors approximately 6 feet to be flush with the front façade, along with the addition of a portico, provides architectural continuity that a smaller adjustment would not effectively address.

From Staff: The minimum necessary action could be to select an alternative remodeling plan that complies with Code. The selected plan cannot be achieved without a Variance, but the granting of the request would still provide for all other required bulk and site standards to be met. No additional Variances have been requested. ***Standard may be met.***

3. That the special conditions and circumstances were not created by any action of the applicant.

From the Applicant: No, the special conditions and circumstances prompting this variance request were not created by any action of the applicant. The existing building was constructed with a minimal front setback of 3 feet and a recessed entry door. These conditions were present prior to our involvement with the property. We are working within the constraints of the existing structure and site layout to improve functionality, not altering the building in a way that would create new zoning challenges.

From Staff: As stated above, the site itself presents no characteristics that make it difficult to adhere to the Code. The desire for a new front entry is a circumstance created by the Applicant. The building has functioned within its current format for an extended time. Alternative plans, which meet setback requirements, could have been considered. ***Standard is not met.***

4. That granting the variation request will not give the applicant any special privilege that is denied to others by the Code.

From the Applicant: No, granting this variance would not provide the applicant with any special privilege that is denied to others under the zoning code. The request is being made due to existing physical constraints of the property, including the limited front setback and recessed entry. The proposed modifications are intended to improve functionality, accessibility and safety, not to increase square footage or obtain competitive advantage. Any other property facing similar physical challenge would have ground to make a comparable request under the same conditions. In fact, if you look to the West, all the existing businesses are flush with the property and have no setbacks.

From Staff: Granting the Variance would result in a privilege being given to the Applicant which has not been provided to others in the D-2 District where the five-foot front yard setback will be required for other property owners redeveloping or altering existing structures. Existing nonconforming properties—such as those on the block to the west—are not allowed to increase their nonconformity. ***Standard is not met.***

5. That the granting of the variation will not be detrimental to the public welfare, alter the essential character of the neighborhood, nor unreasonably impair the use or development of adjoining properties.

From the Applicant: No, granting the requested variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, and will not unreasonably impair the use or development of adjoining properties. The proposed changes maintain the scale and appearance of the existing building, and the addition of a modest entry portico will enhance the street facing façade. The improvements are designed to increase safety and accessibility, particularly for ADA compliance, which supports public welfare. The modification does not encroach on neighboring properties and remains within the context of the surrounding commercial buildings. No negative impacts to adjacent property use or development are anticipated.

From Staff: The granting of the Variance would not be detrimental or alter the essential character of the neighborhood. As the Applicant points out, the surrounding area is comprised of similarly-sized structures with setbacks similar to those proposed in this request. Adjacent properties would not be prevented from reasonable use of their lands. Public welfare will not be placed at risk and pedestrian safety will be *improved*. The proposed alterations are not expected to negatively impact any identified drainage, utility, or access easements. The view of the building from the street once the project is completed will be similar in scale to others in the neighborhood, and appropriate setbacks will continue to be provided along the other sides. The project is aimed at improving the aesthetic of the building which could have indirect benefits to the area, in general. **Standard is met.**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the application does not meet all the standards for granting a Variance and recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals take the following actions:

Motion to establish findings of fact that the **standards for approval of a Variance are not met**, that carrying out the strict letter of the Code **does not create a practical difficulty** or particular hardship for the Applicant, and to **deny the request** for Variance to § 44-503 (Table 503B), as presented.

Respectfully submitted,
Jon Branham
Planner II

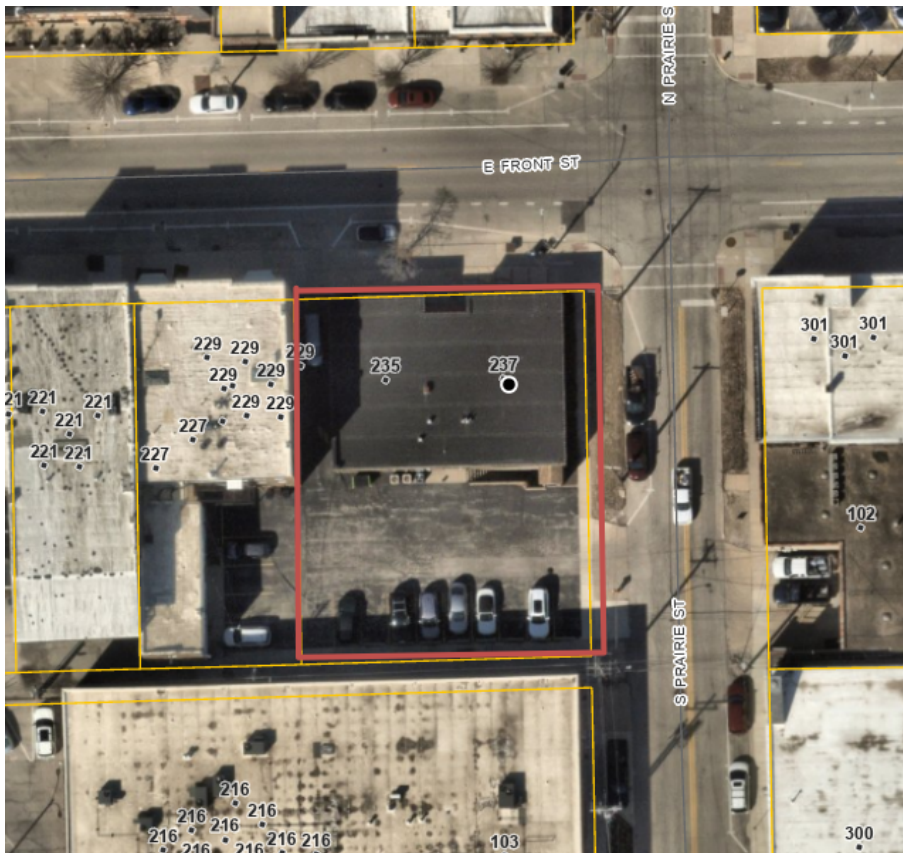
Attachments:

1. Zoning Map
2. Aerial Image
3. Ground-Level Views
4. Neighborhood notice map
5. Site Plans (separate attachments)
6. Elevations (separate attachments)

Attachment 1 - Zoning Map



Attachment 2 - Aerial Image



Attachment 3 - Ground-Level Views

Subject Property



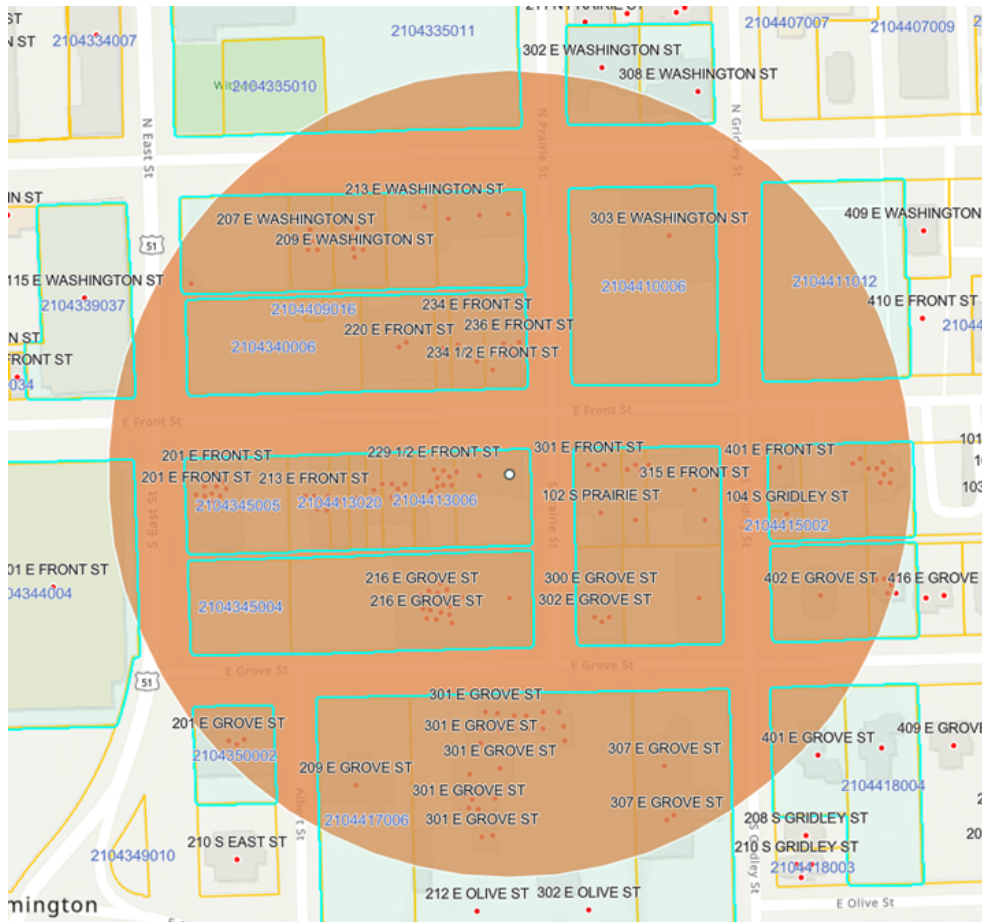
Adjacent Properties to West of Subject Property

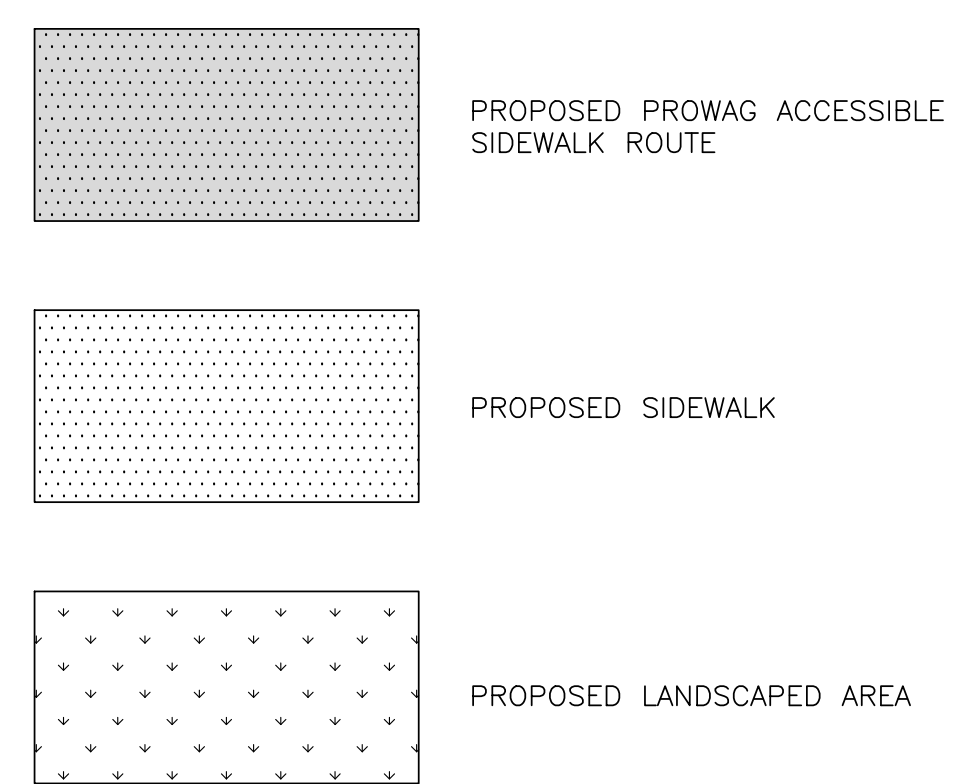
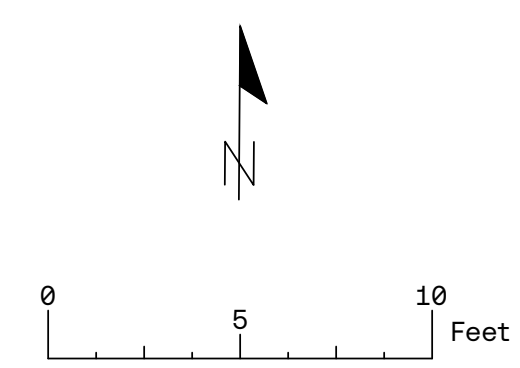
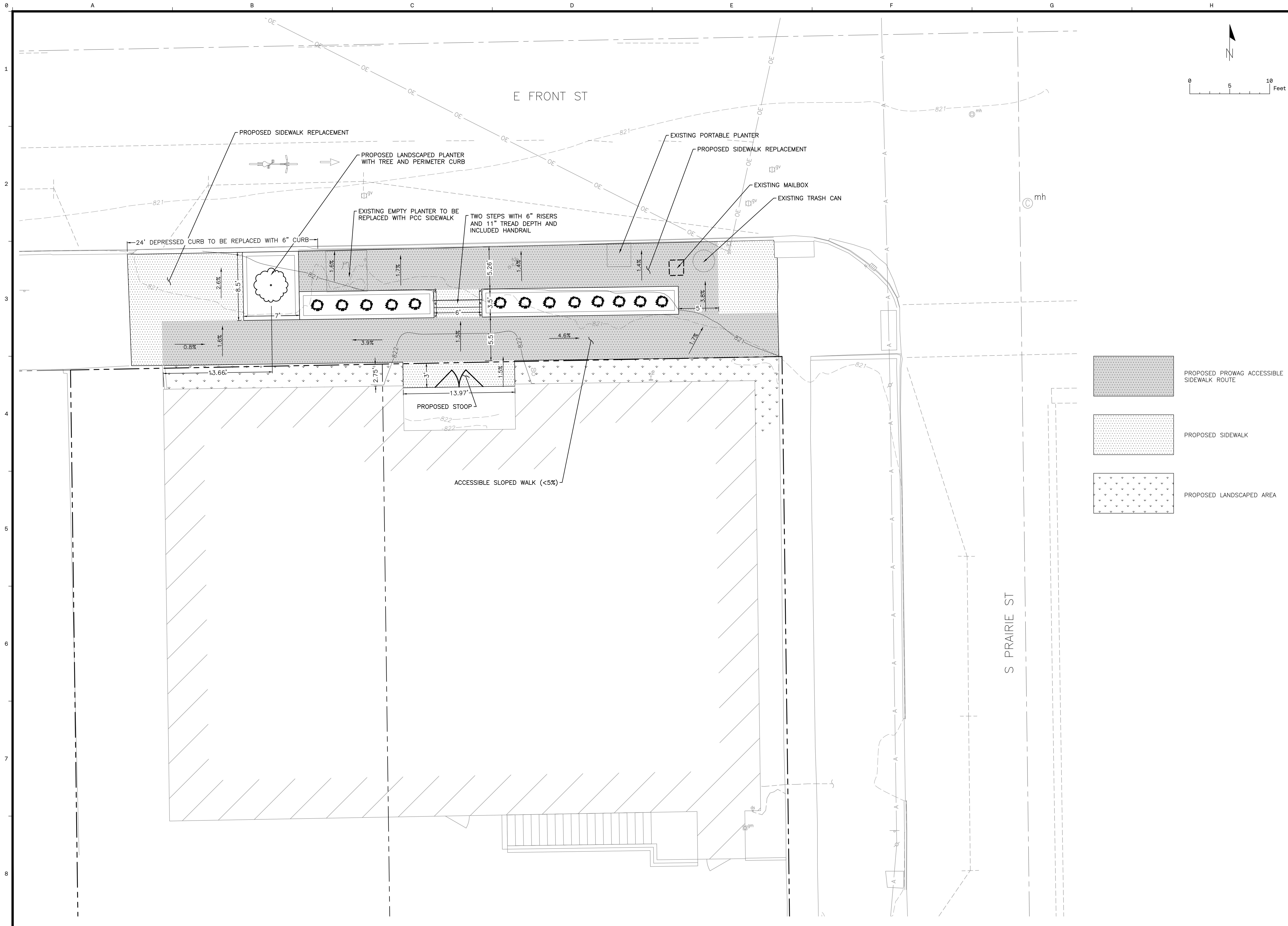


Properties on north side of E Front St (across street from Subject Property)



Attachment 4 - Neighborhood notice map





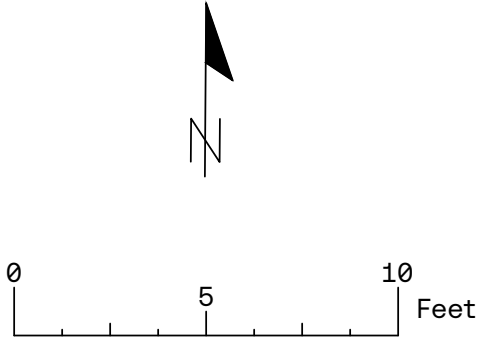
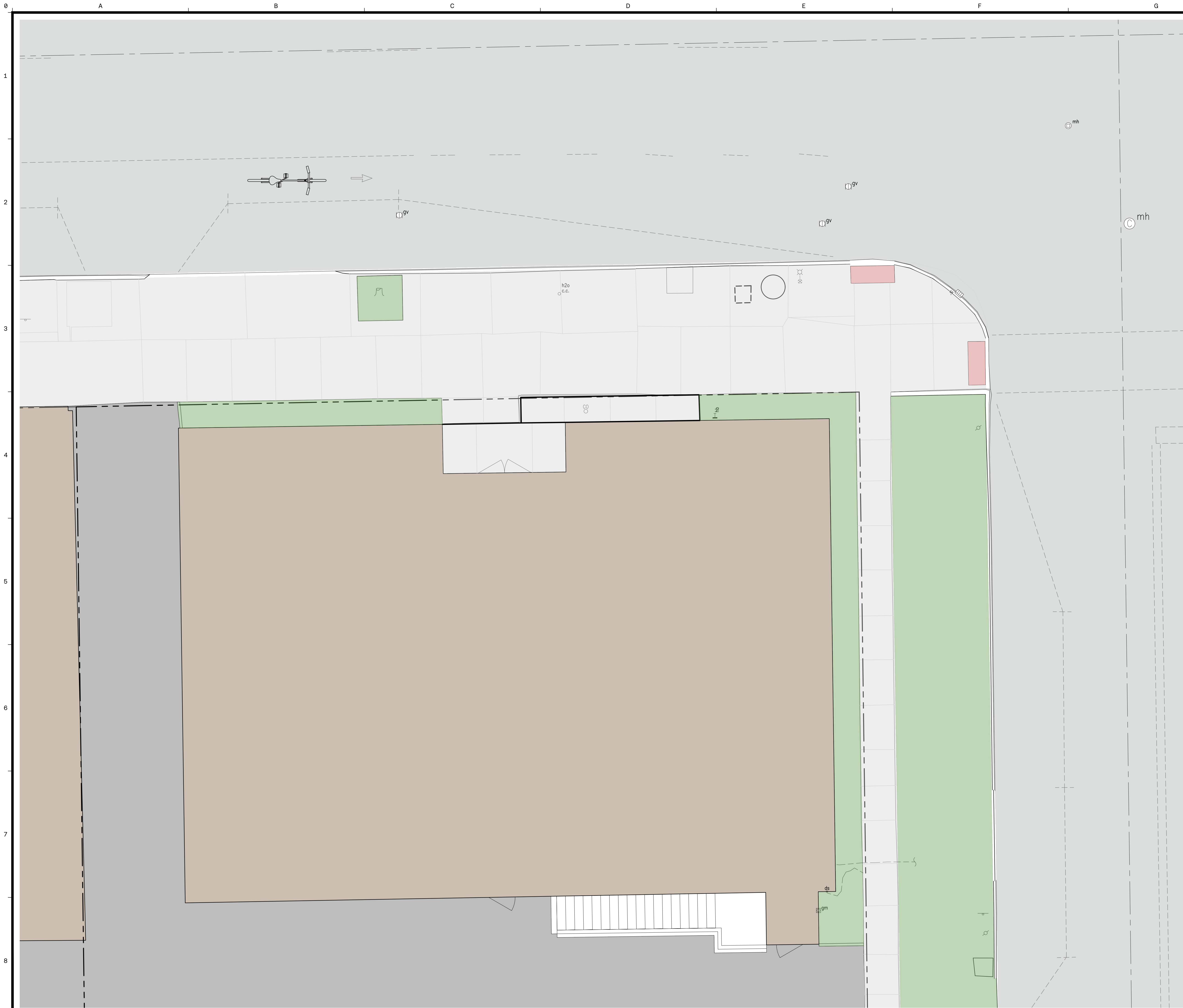
SITE IMPROVEMENTS
KANOSKI BRESNEY
237 EAST FRONT STREET
BLOOMINGTON, IL

ISSUED FOR:

PLAN DATES:
10/08/25 drawn by CCM
checked by

SHEET TITLE:
**LAYOUT
CONCEPT**

SHEET NUMBER:
000
PROJECT NO: 240164



SITE IMPROVEMENTS
 KANOSKI BRESNEY
 237 EAST FRONT STREET
 BLOOMINGTON, IL

ISSUED FOR:

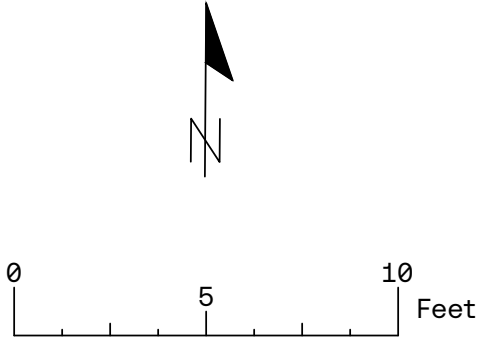
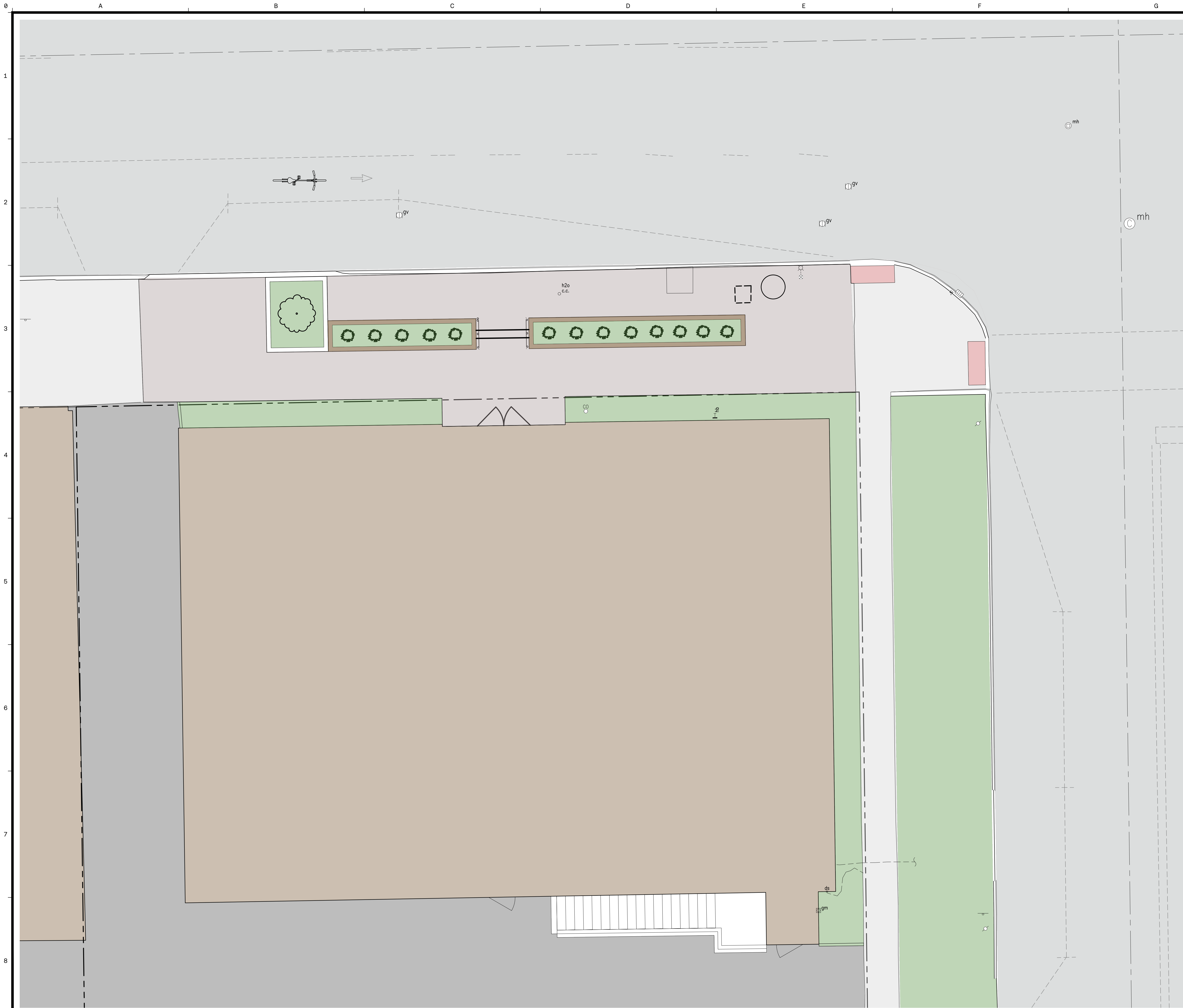
PLAN DATES:

drawn by
 checked by

SHEET TITLE:
**EXHIBIT
 EXISTING**

SHEET NUMBER:
EX-A

PROJECT NO: 240164



SITE IMPROVEMENTS
 KANOSKI BRESNEY
 237 EAST FRONT STREET
 BLOOMINGTON, IL

ISSUED FOR:

PLAN DATES:

drawn by
 checked by

SHEET TITLE:
**EXHIBIT
 PROPOSED**

SHEET NUMBER:
EX-B

PROJECT NO: 240164



ORIGINAL ENTRANCE FEATURE ELEVATION



ELEVATION STUDY - FLAT CEILING



Regular Agenda Item No. 5.B.

For Zoning Board of Appeals: November 19, 2025

Ward Impacted: City Wide

Subject: Boards & Commissions Refresher Presentation, as requested by the Legal Department.

Recommended Motion: None; Presentation Only.

Strategic Plan:

Goal 1. Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services

Objective 1c. Engaged residents that are well informed and involved in an open governance process

Background: Short discussion on the shape of hearings, duties and obligations of the Board, and tips for interacting with different forms of evidence or opinion. An opportunity for Q & A will also be provided. This presentation is being provided to multiple Boards & Commissions.

Community Groups/Interested Persons Contacted: N/A

Financial Impact: N/A

Attachments:

None