



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 desirous 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 Williams 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

Terry Ballantini, Board Chair

Jon Branham

Jon Branham, Staff Liaison